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Greece Reinvented

*Transformations of Byzantine Hellenism in
Renaissance Italy*

By

Han Lamers



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Cover illustration: portraits of nine Greek scholars: Cardinal Bessarion, Manuel Chrysoloras, Demetrius Chalcondylas, Theodore Gazes, John Argyropoulos, George Trapezuntius, Markos Mousourous, Michele Tarcaniota Marullo and Ianus Lascaris. Print by Theodoor Galle, Antwerp, around 1600. Courtesy Rijksmuseum Amsterdam (object RP-P-OB-6846).

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Preface

The Great Council Hall in Venice once exhibited a series of paintings on historical subjects, begun by Gentile Bellini in 1474 but executed by various painters over several decades. In the scene of the *Consignment of the Umbrella*, Vittore Carpaccio depicted the pope, the emperor, and the doge at their arrival at the port of Ancona in 1177, when the Venetian prince received, as a token of his autonomy, the umbrella from Pope Alexander III. The painter also incorporated some prominent figures from the more recent past into the scene. Among them were, dressed in the Greek manner with “quasi-Albanian hats” on their heads, Manuel Chrysoloras, Theodore Gazes, John Argyropoulos, George Trapezuntius, and Demetrius Chalcondylas: five Byzantine Greek scholars who had worked and lived in Italy during the long fifteenth century. Their portraits have rightly been said to constitute a virtual chronology of Hellenic studies in Quattrocento Italy: from the arrival of Manuel Chrysoloras in Florence in 1397 to the death of Demetrius Chalcondylas in Milan in 1511, while Carpaccio was working on his painting.¹

Fire destroyed the work in 1577, but Carpaccio’s inclusion of the Greek scholars shows that these men were seen as ornaments to the cultural and intellectual history of Venice, even if they spent most of their active careers outside that city. Their role in the flourishing of Renaissance culture is also recognised in literary sources, most notably in Paolo Giovio’s famous history of illustrious men of letters, published in the year Carpaccio’s painting was lost in flames, which included the biographies of the Greek scholars depicted in Venice, among others, accompanied by their posthumous portraits. Modern scholarship, too, has stressed the eminent importance of these scholars for the transmission of Greek literature from Byzantium via Italy to the Western world. Chrysoloras wrote the first Greek grammar for a Latin audience, Gazes translated works of Aristotle and Theophrastus into Latin, Argyropoulos introduced Greek philosophy to his students, Trapezuntius wrote the first humanist handbook of rhetoric, and Chalcondylas prepared, during his professorship at Florence, the first printed edition of all of Homer’s surviving works (1489). Others—Cardinal Bessarion, Andronikos Kontovlakas, Andronikos Kallistos, Ianus and Constantine Lascaris, Markos Mousouros, and many more lesser-known scholars, copyists, and editors—also greatly contributed to the transmission and dissemination of Greek letters in the West.

1 See Brown (1996: 147–48). The description of the scene with the Greeks is in Sansovino (1581: 132^r).

At the same time, Carpaccio's inclusion of the five Greeks in his scene epitomises the rather one-sided way in which the Byzantine intelligentsia in Italy have normally been viewed: as Oriental, Greek foreigners who—instrumental to the culture that hosted them—contributed to the successes of the Italian Renaissance and Latin humanism. This book reverses that perspective by looking at what men like Theodore Gazes and George Trapezuntius had to say about themselves and how they saw their role in the world. They regarded themselves as Greeks, the descendants and heirs of the ancient Hellenes, and claimed the Greek heritage as their own. They called themselves remnants of ancient Hellas and considered the salvation of Hellenism as their mission. It is my contention that, in view of the fact that the 'Byzantines' had traditionally seen themselves as Romans, the outspoken and sometimes provocative 'Greekness' of the Byzantine intelligentsia in Italy is not so self-evident as it might seem in hindsight, with modern Greek nationalism in mind, but must be regarded as a cultural project that prompts questions and asks for explanations. It is one of the more perplexing ironies of history that, exactly at the time that Byzantium, the main centre of Greek culture for centuries, declined and collapsed, a 'new Greece' emerged outside the territory of the late Byzantine Empire and outside Greek-speaking lands. This new brand of Hellenism had its roots in Byzantium but assumed new significance as it developed in new directions in Italy. On the basis of largely understudied sources in Greek, Latin, and Italian, this book explores how the transformation of Hellenism began in Byzantium and took hold in Italy during the long fifteenth century (ca. 1390–1520), with particular emphasis on the period from the second half of the fifteenth century onwards: the period also roughly indicated by the Greek portraits once present in the Great Council Hall of this "second Byzantium" at the Laguna.

Acknowledgements

The present study originated in my doctoral thesis, made possible by a special grant of the Dutch Council for Arts and Sciences (NWO, Nederlandse Organisatie voor Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek). I publicly defended my thesis at the University of Leiden on 12 June 2013, and I am grateful to the seven members of the examination committee for sharing their thoughts with me on this occasion: Gerard Boter, Jonathan Harris, Joep Leerssen, Nicolette Mout, Judith Pollmann, Anthonya Visser, and Antje Wessels. The better parts of this study pay tribute to the dedication of my supervisors Ineke Sluiter, Anthony Grafton, and Arnoud Visser, whom I want to thank for their ever-encouraging criticisms. I am also grateful to Han van Ruler, Arjan van Dijk, Ivo Romein, and Theo Joppe as well as Brill's anonymous reviewers, for their valuable assistance in transforming my dissertation into the present monograph.

It is exciting to work in a blossoming field such as the study of Renaissance Hellenism. Since I completed my thesis in September 2012, numerous relevant studies, monographs, editions, and translations have continued to appear. In revising my work, I did my best to acknowledge as many of them as I could. Apart from the many more contributions listed in the bibliography, some milestones were George Tolia's *Mapping Greece, 1420–1800: A History* (2012); Rudolf Stefec's complete edition of Michael Apostoles' letters (2013), replacing the partial editions of Émile Legrand and Hippolyte Noiret; and the collected volume on Bessarion, edited by Claudia Märkl, Christian Kaiser, and Thomas Ricklin (2013). In reworking my dissertation, I also benefitted from Charles Fantazzi's first full English translation of Michele Marullo's poems (2012) as well as Roland Guillot's French translation of his epigrams with commentary (2012). Anthony Kaldellis' translation of Laonikos Chalkokondyles with accompanying monograph appeared after I completed the manuscript of this book, but I am very grateful to him for allowing me to look at parts of his unpublished work. Moreover, many works are being prepared as I write this. For example, Scott Kennedy is translating into English Bessarion's eulogy on Trebizond (discussed in Chapter 3) for the Dumbarton Oaks Medieval Library, Alexander Riehle is editing and translating Michael Apostoles' funeral oration for Bessarion (cited in Chapter 3), and John Monfasani is editing Trapezuntius' *Comparatio philosophorum Aristotelis and Platonis* (central to Chapter 4). Unfortunately, this book came too early to benefit from their efforts.

I gratefully acknowledge the support of all colleagues and friends who took time to discuss texts and ideas with me at seminars, conferences, or in

personal correspondence and conversation. They are too numerous to list fully, but I would like to single out Anthony Kaldellis, Aslıhan Akışık Karakullukçu, Patrick Baker, Peter Bell, Natasha Constantinidou-Taylor, Karl Enenkel, Christian Förstel, Thierry Ganchou, Edward V. George, Dimitri Gutas, Donald F. Jackson, Maarten Jansen, Frederick Lauritzen, Coen Maas, Anna Mastrogianni, Erika Nuti, Vassilios Pappas, Eugenia Russell, Dirk Sacré, Luigi Silvano, Niketas Siniosoglou, Rudolf Stefec, Raf Van Rooy, and Fotis Vassileiou. I am also greatly indebted to the libraries where I found material for my research, especially the Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, the FU Philologische Bibliothek, the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, the Faculty of Arts Library of KU Leuven, the splendid Tabularium, and the Special Collections of Leiden University Library. My thanks go out to the staffs of many more libraries for providing me with all the necessary support. I further greatly appreciate the courtesy of Philip van der Eijk (Humboldt University of Berlin), Johannes Helmrath (Humboldt University of Berlin), Bernd Roling (Freie Universität Berlin), Kristoffel Demoen (Ghent University), Jan Papy (University of Leuven), Jonathan Harris (Royal Holloway, University of London), and the staff of the Royal Netherlands Institute in Rome (KNIR) for welcoming me in Berlin, Ghent, Leuven, London, and Rome.

Most important has been the tranquil love and attentive support of my parents. My debt to them, as to my alter ego, is beyond measure.

This book is dedicated to the memory of Hippolyte Noiret who died in Venice in 1888, aged 24.

Conventions and Abbreviations

The word ‘Byzantines’ to refer to the inhabitants of the Eastern Roman Empire was not coined before the sixteenth century. If only for this reason, a brief preliminary note on what the Byzantines will be called throughout this study is in order. In discussions of primary sources in Greek or Latin, the choice of the original authors was followed. This means that *Graecus* or Γραικός has been rendered as ‘Greek’, Ἑλλην as ‘Hellene’, both *Romanus* and Ῥωμαῖος as ‘Roman’, and *Romaeus* as ‘Romaeian’. The rare Latin *Romaei* has been translated with ‘Romaeians’ in order to differentiate it from the more frequent Latin word *Romani*, ‘Romans’. The Byzantines used Ῥωμαῖοι to refer to both themselves and the ancient Romans. To my best knowledge, only three Byzantine authors used Ῥωμαῖοι and Ῥωμαῖνοι to denote different groups. These are Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus in *De administrando imperio* (ca. 952), Kanavoutzes in *In Dionysium Halicarnassensem commentarius* (1st half of the 15th cent.), and Doukas in his *Historia Turcobyzantina* (ca. 1462). While Doukas (13.8.11) and Kanavoutzes (*passim*) used Ῥωμαῖοι and Ῥωμαῖνοι to differentiate between Eastern and Western Romans respectively, Porphyrogenitus (29.1–53) distinguished between Byzantines (Ῥωμαῖοι) and the Roman colonists who had settled in Dalmatia and elsewhere under Emperor Diocletian (Ῥωμαῖνοι). Outside the analysis of primary sources, the terms ‘Byzantines’ and ‘Eastern Romans’ or ‘Romans of the East’ are used interchangeably in order to remind us from time to time that ‘our’ Byzantines called themselves Romans.

Inconsistent choices had to be made regarding the names of places and individuals. After Speake (2000: xxxvi), ancient Greek names have been given in their most common ‘Latin’ forms, whereas medieval and modern Greek names have been given in their most common ‘Greek’ (i.e. transliterated) forms. In cases of doubt, transliterations generally follow the guidelines of ISO 843: 1997 (omitting accents and diacritics). The names of Renaissance humanists, too, have been given in their most common forms. All personal names can be looked up in the General Index, where the relevant variant names are given together with dates of birth and death.

References to ancient authors and their works in the footnotes generally follow the abbreviations used in the fourth edition of *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, edited by Simon Hornblower, Antony Spawforth, and Esther Eidinow (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012). Authors and works not included in the *OCD* are referred to in accordance with the ninth edition of *A Greek-English Lexicon*, edited by Henry George Liddell, Robert Scott, and Henry Stuart Jones (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996) and the first edition of the *Oxford Latin*

Dictionary, edited by P.G.W. Glare (Oxford/New York: Clarendon Press, 1982). Whenever an author or work remained unmentioned in the above-mentioned reference works, the full name or title is cited.

In the footnotes, the following abbreviations are used:

- BA Biblioteca Angelica, Rome
 BAM Biblioteca Ambrosiana, Milan
 BAV Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Rome
 BE Biblioteca Estense, Modena
 BML Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Florence
 BNC Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Florence
 BNE Biblioteca Nacional de España, Madrid
 BNM Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Venice
 BNP Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris
 BR Biblioteca Riccardiana, Florence
 BSB Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich
 SB Staatsbibliothek, Berlin
 CT *The Classical Tradition*, edited by Anthony Grafton, Glenn W. Most, and Salvatore Settis. Cambridge, Mass./London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010.
 DBI *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*. Treccani Online. <www.treccani.it/biografie>
 EGHT *Encyclopedia of Greece and the Hellenic Tradition*, edited by Graham Speake. 2 vols. London/Chicago: Fitzroy Dearborn, 2000.
 LSJ *Greek-English Lexicon*, edited by Henry George Liddell, Robert Scott, and Henry Stuart Jones. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996.
 NLW *Neulateinische Wortliste. Ein Wörterbuch des Lateinischen von Petrarca bis 1700*, edited by Johann Ramminger. <www.neulatein.de>
 NP *Der Neue Pauly*, edited by Hubert Cancik, Helmuth Schneider, and Manfred Landfester. Brill Online, 2012.
 ODB *Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, edited by Alexander P. Kazhdan. 3 vols. Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press, 1991.
 OLD *Oxford Latin Dictionary*, edited by P.G.W. Glare. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2007.
 PLP *Prosopographisches Lexikon der Paläologenzeit*, edited by Erich Trapp. 12 vols. Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1976–94.

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Introduction

In the fifteenth century, the greatest part of the Byzantine Greek intelligentsia moved to the Latin West, particularly Italy, for a combination of cultural, political, and economic reasons. They brought with them knowledge of ancient Greek and Greek literature, as well as Greek manuscripts, and Italian humanists welcomed them as transmitters of Greek learning. This exodus of Byzantine thinkers has been recognised as a major catalyst for Italian humanism. Although modern historians (like the Italian humanists themselves) wrote about this cultural encounter in terms of a cultural transfer or *translatio studiorum*, the Byzantine Greeks generally resisted this point of view. They strove to maintain claims to what they considered to be ‘their’ ancient legacy and even based political claims on their ‘possession’ of it. This identification with, and appropriation of, Greek antiquity implies a break with traditional Byzantine Hellenism. It is a well-known fact that the Byzantines had traditionally seen themselves as heirs to ancient Rome and had therefore called themselves Romans, or *Ῥωμαῖοι* in Greek. During most of their millennium of history, they had seen the ancient Greeks as a foreign people: they regarded the study of ancient Greek literature as ‘learning from outside’ and used the word ‘Hellenes’ to refer to pagans of any language or origin. The displaced intelligentsia in Italy broke with this tradition. One of them even suggested that their present misery was due to the fact that they had abandoned the wisdom of their Greek ancestors, but they still called themselves Romans instead of Hellenes.¹ This newly found ‘Greekness’ largely, if not completely, cut ties with the Roman tradition and experimented with new forms of communal belonging that had previously been banned from the Roman-Christian community the Byzantines had always felt themselves to be.

This book explores this phenomenon in the context of two issues that the scholarship has too often discussed in isolation: the transformation of Hellenism after Byzantium waned and the intensifying encounter between Greeks and Latins during the fifteenth century. It also recounts my attempt to understand why Greek antiquity could matter so much to the *dotti bizantini* of Italy that they were prepared to abandon their ancient claims to the Roman heritage in order to become, far removed from Greece, representatives of the ancient Hellenes. Their strong relationships with the ancient Greeks were at the basis of their idea of the Hellenes as a community that generally transcended religious, political, or geographical borders. This is particularly important when

1 I. Lascaris (ed. Meschini 1976: 57, no. 30, ll. 8–12). See also Chapter 1, p. 58.

such borders were in flux or even broke down, as they eventually did after 1453. Deno J. Geanakoplos once observed that “[t]here can be little doubt that what, in the last analysis, made the Greek people feel different from all others was the knowledge of the accomplishments of the ancient Greeks and necessarily, a priori, a sense of identification with them as ancestors”.² In conjunction with this, he continued that their “sense of individuation was often heightened by the attitude of Italian humanists, who not only admired their skill in ancient learning but sometimes flattered them as being the progeny of the ancients”.³

How did Byzantine scholars in Italy construct a sense of continuity with the ancient Hellenes? What motivated them to adopt a Greek identity in the first place? And what did they do with their millenary claim to the Roman heritage? Did they abandon it or did they somehow work it into their sense of ‘Greekness’? These questions have not been addressed in detail, if at all. Byzantinists generally ignored the issue as being too recent and too Italian, Hellenists saw it as being too Latin, Neo-Latinists discarded it as being too Greek, and the study of the Greek diaspora has almost exclusively focused on modernity.⁴ As Jan Ziolkowski eloquently put it, sometimes scholarly “fields can have the solidity but rigidity of railroad tracks in enabling efficient transportation at the cost of freedom and autonomy”.⁵ The present study wants to lay some new tracks. It shows how several diverse representatives of the Byzantine intelligentsia in Italy constructed their sense of Greekness and so brings together both eminent and lesser-known figures who have normally been discussed separately. In this, it does not aim to rewrite the complex history of Hellenism after Byzantium but attempts to reframe common ways of looking at it.

Throughout this study, I distinguish between ‘Greekness’ and ‘Hellenism’.⁶ Hellenism denotes the study and imitation of ancient Greek literature and was

2 Geanakoplos (1976: 174).

3 Geanakoplos (1976: 175).

4 Ziolkowski (2014: 24).

5 Illustratively, the *Journal of the Hellenic Diaspora* focuses on “the Greek experience from the late eighteenth century to the present”, so that the period between the end of Byzantium and classical modernity (the period between 1453 and the outbreak of the French Revolution in 1789) has generally slipped through the cracks. The absence of an overview of the seminal Latin texts produced by Byzantine intellectuals was noted by Jozef IJsewijn in the first part of his seminal *Companion to Neo-Latin Studies*, but has since then not been remedied. A concise attempt is Lamers (2014a).

6 A similar distinction between Hellenism and “grecité” was made, in a slightly different context, by Dagron (2001: 784–91). It must be noted that this distinction is void of the evaluative overtones of George Seferis’ famous distinction between “Ελληνικότητα” (usually translated as Greekness) and “Ελληνισμός” (Hellenism), which are in turn distinct from “Ρωμιοσύνη”

the basis of Byzantine education or *paideia*. In Byzantium, Hellenism had traditionally been restricted to the adoption of a classicising Greek style, but it could incidentally spill over into enthusiasm for ancient philosophy as well. When that occurred, Byzantines tended to reject it as a radical or even heterodox way of thinking, especially if they suspected Neopaganism behind the more profound interest in pagan thought. Greekness, by contrast, refers to the ethno-cultural identification with the ancient Greeks as a group. Although it often includes traditional Hellenism (in the sense of writing in a classicising Greek style), it is unlike radical types of Hellenism in that it does not by definition presuppose a worldview that is felt to be incompatible with Christianity. The Byzantine intelligentsia in Italy generally created a secular Greekness that was as compatible with Christianity, as was the ‘Romanness’ of most Latin humanists. Their Greekness could in fact exist independently of Hellenism. Some of them—the famous poet Michele Marullo, for example—constructed their Greekness largely outside the context of Hellenism and used Latin as their principal language of expression, sometimes ‘translating’ or reworking Greek templates to fashion their personas.

Historical Background

During the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, an increasing number of Byzantines came to the Latin West. Some of them visited the West as part of diplomatic missions, such as the missions under Manuel II (1395–1402) and John VIII Palaeologus (1443) or the ecclesiastical Councils of Constance (1416–1418) and Ferrara-Florence (1438–1439). In addition to such occasional visits, some Byzantines settled more permanently in the West, especially in Italy, both before and after the fall of Constantinople in 1453. Their migration to Italy from the onset of the Quattrocento is a notable chapter in the history of the Greek diaspora.⁷ Exactly how many Byzantine migrants came to the West

(Romiosyni). These words represent different aspects of the psycho-cultural experience of being Greek. For Seferis’ complex distinction, see Brewer (2012: 273–74).

7 Cf. Chasiotis, Katsiardi-Hering and Abatzi (2006), Harris (1995a), Zakythinis (1976: 115–39), Vakalopoulos (1970: 234–55). The early modern Greek diaspora has not received the attention of its modern counterpart. Studies generally take a traditional historical point of view and examine the migrants’ motivations, their activities in their host societies, the centres of their settlement, their contribution to the revival of Greek studies, and their role in cultural transfers from East to West. An extensive bibliography about the Greek diaspora is available at <www.fhw.gr/projects/migration/15-19/gr/v2/bibliografia.html>. A very short overview of the Greek diaspora throughout history is Lambros Kamperidis’ entry in *EGHT* s.v. “Diaspora”

is unknown due to the absence of statistical data.⁸ The fall of Constantinople (1453), the capture of the Morea (1460), the seizure of Negroponte (1470), the Venetian losses at Modon and Coron (1500), and other Ottoman advances into Greek-speaking areas all stirred waves of migration. Migrants from the Greek East were, however, not always “fugitives” who, in Edward Gibbon’s words, escaped “from the terror or oppression of the Turkish arms”.⁹ They left their homes for many reasons—political, religious, economic, and cultural.¹⁰ Other Greeks chose to remain in the Ottoman Empire, and some gained high positions there, including the historian Kritovoulos of Imbros (who wrote the Sultan’s history and acted as his spokesman) and George Amiroutzes (who proposed a syncretism of Islam and Christianity and whose sons actually converted to Islam).¹¹ Others, too, remained in the Greek-speaking East but dwelled in Latin rather than Ottoman circles, as both the historian Doukas and the philologist John Kanavoutzes on Lesbos probably did under the Gattilusi. This reminds us that it is difficult to speak of ‘the’ Greek world in this period: there were various ‘Greek worlds’ with different, and sometimes overlapping, spheres of influence and centres of gravity. The Greek diaspora in Italy was just one such Greek world.

This world was in itself diverse. Besides prominent members of late-Byzantine intellectual and political life, there were also less learned and less eminent Byzantines who turned to the Italian peninsula, where they contributed to their host societies in various fields. In Venice, for instance, Byzantine migrants found employment in the city’s naval and mercantile enterprises: they were rowers on Venetian galleys or carpenters in the Arsenal; they worked as tailors or joined the *stradioti*, a corps of reputed Greek mercenaries. While the majority of Byzantine expatriates lived in Greek communities such as those in Naples and Venice, members of the Byzantine elite were mostly welcomed at the courts of Italian princes and popes in Florence, Urbino, Milan, and Rome, or at Bessarion’s Roman court next to the church of the Twelve Holy

(see also Papadia-Lala 2008 for Greek expatriations between the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries and Katsiardi-Hering 2006 for the Greek diaspora from the fall of Constantinople to Greek independence).

8 Harris (1995a: 24–38). Kourniakos (2013: 446) claims that the migration was largely confined to the elite, which seems not to have been the case.

9 Gibbon (1926: 129).

10 Harris (1995a: 9–38).

11 Philippides and Hanak (2011: 72). On Kritovoulos, see Alice-Mary Talbot’s entry in *OBD* s.v. “Kritoboulos, Michael”, with further references there. On George Amiroutzes see, most recently, Monfasani (2011a) and Janssens and Van Deun (2004) with helpful bibliographies.

Apostles, which remained a home for many Byzantine intellectuals until the cardinal's death in 1472.¹²

The Byzantine intelligentsia in Italy formed a cultural and intellectual elite that was largely if not totally independent of the patriarch in Constantinople. They had a pro-Latin attitude, meaning that they not only recognised and sometimes appreciated Italian progress in art and scholarship but also often converted to Roman Catholicism or adhered to the Union of the Churches (a Union that was agreed upon in Florence in 1439, but that a considerable portion of the Byzantine population never accepted).¹³ The fact that many Greek scholars accepted Roman primacy in ecclesiastical affairs helped to improve the image of the Greeks in the Latin West.¹⁴ The advance of the Ottoman Turks also catalysed less hostile attitudes towards the Latin West: both Greeks and Latins regarded the Turks as a persistent menace to the Christian world, both before and after 1453. In contrast to a large and influential part of the Byzantine clergy, many members of the Byzantine intelligentsia before 1453 argued that the Ottoman Turks could only be stopped with the assistance of the Latin West, especially that of the papacy. For some, both Latins and Greeks, doctrinal differences as well as political grievances thus became increasingly irrelevant in the face of a common enemy. After 1453, they continued their appeals to Western powers to unite against the Ottoman Turks and to liberate the Greeks.

The more pro-Latin attitude of the Byzantine intelligentsia had its roots in a generation of scholars that, from the second half of the fourteenth century, had been prepared to overcome cultural bias and doctrinal intolerance and started to study Latin texts, in particular Latin theology. Demetrios Kydones is often seen as the principal instigator of this movement.¹⁵ A serious student of Latin theology, he eventually converted to the Roman Church in 1357. Importantly, he connected his fascination with Latin theology to his firm belief that it was necessary for Byzantium to establish loyal allies in the Latin West in order to counter the advance of the Turks. As a high-ranking official at the

12 For some learned Greeks in Bessarion's circle, see e.g. Diller (1967), Mastrodimitris (1971), and Minnich (1988); in the entourage of Lorenzo de' Medici Irmischer (1995); at the papal court in Rome Harris (2011b) and Niutta (1990). On the relations of some of these intellectuals with the Greek communities of Italy, see Pardos (1998) and Mauroeidi-Ploumidi (1971: 181–84). For literature on Bessarion, see Chapter 3, p. 94, n. 6.

13 Harris (1995a: 42–43). A notable exception among the elite was Anna Notaras, who had the Orthodox liturgy celebrated secretly at her house in Venice (Harris 1999: 199).

14 Bisaha (2004: 133–34).

15 Angold (2006: 65–69). For Kydones' position between Greek East and Latin West, see Ryder (2011).

Byzantine court and an eminent scholar, Kydones stimulated a younger generation of Byzantines, including Manuel Kalekas and Manuel Chrysoberges, to embrace the study of Latin theology and to work towards a less hostile, more hospitable attitude towards the Roman Church and the Latin West in general. One of the most prominent scholars and diplomats working in Kydones' spirit was Manuel Chrysoloras, who was the first Byzantine professor of Greek in the Latin West (1397–1400) as well as a zealous advocate of ecclesiastical union.¹⁶ Chrysoloras in particular encapsulates another facet of the cultural rapprochements of Latins and Greeks in the fifteenth century. In addition to their general pro-Latin attitude, men such as Kydones, Kalekas, Chrysoloras, and even Emperor Manuel II shared some of the literary interests of the Italian scholars they met during diplomatic missions. Scholars of Palaeologan Byzantium wrote in a classicising Greek modelled on the writers of the Second Sophistic and interspersed their writings with classical quotations, covering modern persons and places in classical draperies. In addition to the Greek Fathers and theology, they immersed themselves in Homer, Demosthenes, Plato, Thucydides, and Plutarch. As James Hankins has pointed out, the role of the classical tradition in Palaeologan Byzantium was not unlike the role classical culture was beginning to play in Italy.¹⁷

The friendly ways in which Italian humanists received Manuel Chrysoloras in Florence and the ways he was remembered throughout the century illuminate how changed cultural perceptions in the Latin West, too, contributed to more friendly Greco-Latin relations. Chrysoloras' chair of Greek in Florence initiated a tradition of Byzantine professors teaching in the West that was continued after the fall of Constantinople, not only in Florence, but soon also in Venice, Rome, Padua, Milan, and elsewhere, until the expansion of Greek studies in Italy came to an end after the reign of Pope Leo X (1521). Many of the men whose works I studied—for example, George Trapezuntius of Crete, Theodore Gazes, Demetrius Chalcondylas, and Ianus Lascaris—taught Greek in Italy or translated or edited Greek classics. Very often, like Manuel Chrysoloras, they combined their teaching with galvanising support for their country.

After Chrysoloras, later generations of Byzantine Greek scholars were actively involved in the learned culture of Italy, especially after the fall of Byzantium in 1453. They corresponded with Latin humanists in Latin, wrote Latin verse, and contributed to philosophical and rhetorical issues which were of interest to Italian humanists, often also in Latin. Some of them—for

16 Matschke and Tinnefeld (2001: 330–44) offer a concise overview of this rapprochement with the Latin West.

17 Hankins (2003b: 331–32).



ILLUSTRATION 1 *Tobias Stimmer, portrait of Manuel Chrysoloras. From Paolo Giovio, Elogia virorum literis illustrium (Basle: Petrus Perna, 1577), p. 28. DFG-Projekt CAMENA, Heidelberg-Mannheim.*

example, George Trapezuntius—wrote their major works directly in Latin, while others—for example, Michele Marullo—wrote in Latin exclusively. Unlike Kydones and Chrysoloras, they were no longer the ambassadors of Byzantium who would return home after their mission, but had become residents with little hope of returning to their native country any time soon.¹⁸ Like Michele Marullo and Manilio Cabacio Rallo, some of them even came to Italy as a child or early adolescent and received most of their education there.

¹⁸ Note that, in 1494, Andreas Palaeologus sold all his rights to the thrones of Constantinople, Trebizond, and Serbia to the French king, Charles VIII, in return for an annuity for the rest of his life. In 1502, the year of his death, he sold his royal and imperial rights again, this time to Ferdinand II of Aragon and Isabella I of Castille (see Harris 1995a: 116–17, Harris 1995b, Floristán Imízcoz 2004, Vespignani 2008).

The position of these scholars also differed from that of Chrysoloras in another respect, especially after 1453. During the Council of Ferrara-Florence (1438–39), George Gemistos Plethon (whose controversial ideas on Hellenism will be discussed in Chapter 1) had been welcomed with curiosity and amazement by many Italian humanists—some of them former students of Chrysoloras—eager to learn more about the philosopher's excitingly novel views on Plato and Aristotle.¹⁹ As Byzantium became increasingly dependent upon Western military and economic aid over the course of the century, a process that climaxed with the siege and fall of Constantinople in 1453, and as the number of Byzantine Greeks in Italy increased, the situation seems to have changed.²⁰ The novelty and spectacle of a Byzantine emperor and his Greek entourage visiting the Latin West ebbed away, and after 1453 Byzantine Greeks were in fact reduced to the social status of homeless beggar clients, with the notable exception of Cardinal Bessarion.²¹ While Chrysoloras had been cordially invited by the Florentine chancellor, most of the Byzantines who settled in Italy after him did so without such an eminent invitation.

Over the course of the century, the Byzantine intelligentsia in Italy became increasingly alienated from the remaining elite in Constantinople and the majority of the Byzantine population who stayed in the Greek East, where strong anti-Latin sentiments lingered on, classical education was largely absent, and the Orthodox Patriarchate became the focus of the Greek community under Ottoman rule.²² Byzantine Greeks in the East generally resisted a union with the Roman Church, and for many of them familiarity with, or enthusiasm for, Latin culture suggested sympathy with the Church of Rome. Religious hostility towards so-declared *Latinophrones* or 'Latin-minded' Greeks explains why some Greek proponents of union with Rome felt compelled to move to the Latin West.²³ For example, George Trapezuntius of Crete, who left his native island as early as 1416, later complained about how his fellow Greeks had bullied him for his sympathy to the Latin Church.²⁴ Michael Apostoles

19 On the Council of Ferrara-Florence generally, see in particular the book-length studies of Gill (1959, 1964) and Alberigo (1991).

20 Bianca (1999: 5–7; 2013: 155–56) and Philippides and Hanak (2011: 196–97).

21 Although compared with other Byzantines in Italy Bessarion was extremely well-off, his wealth as a cardinal must not be exaggerated. Especially in his early years, Bessarion was among the poorer cardinals at the Curia. His financial situation improved gradually over time due to his good relations with popes and princes (Henderson 2013: 101).

22 On the situation of the Greeks under the Ottomans, see Brewer (2012).

23 Cf. Monfasani (2012: 40–44).

24 Trapezuntius (ed. Monfasani 1984i: 351–52, §§2–3). For bibliography on Trapezuntius, see Chapter 4, p. 133, n. 2.

fled to Venetian Crete after the fall of Constantinople and maintained close contacts with Bessarion in Rome, visiting him several times in the 1450s and 1460s. The cardinal's financial support enabled Apostoles to open his long-desired Greek school at Crete, but, due to his open pledge of adherence to the Union, he lost many of his students (see also Chapter 1, p. 34) and considered moving to Germany or England.²⁵ Trapezuntius and Apostoles are the better-known examples.²⁶ Much less known is the case of the Cretan priest John Plousiadenos who, as Manoussos Manoussakas reminds us, became so despised by his compatriots that he had to seek a career in Italy.²⁷ Even if the majority of the late- and post-Byzantine population left the theological quarrels between Greeks and Latins to the theologians, the Fourth Crusade and the Latin occupation of Constantinople (1204–61) remained an open wound.²⁸ After 1453, the Patriarchate of Constantinople became the cultural and administrative centre of the Greek-speaking world. This meant that Hellenism became inextricably bound up with loyalty to patriarchal institutions and thus with anti-Latin sentiments.²⁹ Such developments further widened the gap between the pro-Latin (and increasingly Latinised) expatriates and the Byzantine Greeks in the East. Cardinal Bessarion, for instance, developed a mildly hostile attitude towards his fellow Greeks as he saw that they were unwilling to accept the Church Union he had signed for them in 1442.³⁰ However, for Bessarion as well as for other Byzantine intellectuals in the Latin West, sympathy for or adherence to Rome did not prevent them from identifying with Greek-speaking adherents to the Byzantine Church: they looked at them as part of a single Greek people. This shows that their sense of affinity with the Greeks of the East was something that transcended confessional divergences and constituted a secular form of communal belonging.

The Byzantine intelligentsia in Italy exemplify the sociological truism that divergence may exist between the concerns and interests of self-proclaimed representatives and those of the people they claim to represent.³¹ Even if Byzantine expatriates claimed to act as ambassadors of the Greek nation, we

25 Stefec (2013: 16–17). An excellent overview of Apostoles' life and works is Stefec (2013: 5–43).

26 Other well-known examples are Bessarion, Isidore, and the Patriarch of Constantinople Gregory III, who fled anti-Unionist agitation and settled in Rome in 1450 (Harris 1999: 190).

27 On Plousiadenos, see Manoussakas (1959) with Monfasani (2002a: 9, with n. 51).

28 Harris (2011a: 63–66).

29 Livianos (2008).

30 Kourniakos (2013: 452–54, 459).

31 Brubaker (2004: 19).

must realise that they did not voice common Byzantine views or sentiments. If we want to understand their position in the wider Greek-speaking world of the fifteenth century, they come closest to what has been labelled an 'ethnie', i.e. a named group with a sense of shared kinship and common memories, common cultural traits (of language and religion at least), and an association with a historic territory or homeland, even if they no longer inhabit it. The members of such elitist ethnies typically consider themselves to be part of one distinctive people and have a sense of solidarity that is not by definition reciprocated by the wider population they imagine themselves to be part of.³² With respect to their own Hellenism, the Byzantine intelligentsia in Italy reflected not so much an internal Greek or Byzantine point of view as they reflected a Western vantage point on who the Byzantines were. As we shall see, however, this does not imply that their sense of Greekness was unprecedented in Byzantium or merely 'mirrored' Latin viewpoints.

Chronologically, the book covers the 'long fifteenth century' with particular emphasis on the period from the second half of the fifteenth century onwards. This period covers the most intensive contacts between Greeks and Latins as well as the rise and decline of Greek studies on the Italian peninsula. The main reason for this temporal focus is that we have the most source material for Byzantine thought from the second half of the Quattrocento onwards. The period from the second half of the sixteenth century would merit a separate assessment. For this period, there is more (largely unstudied) evidence of contacts between Greeks in the West and the Greek-speaking world, as well as an increasing interest in contemporary Greek culture, probably under the influence of the Reformation and Counter-Reformation. The Reformation and Counter-Reformation also changed the course of Greek studies both north and south of the Alps. In the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Greeks generally came to the West not to teach, but to learn,³³ and they did not only come to Italy, but also increasingly travelled to the North, where they were welcomed by Lutheran humanists who regarded them as allies against Rome.³⁴ The Greekness in the works of later scholars such as Maximos Margounios, Giovanni Cottunio, or Leone Allacci must wait for separate study.

32 A.D. Smith (1995: 28–29).

33 Cf. Glaser (2006: 204).

34 On Lutheran humanists and Greek antiquity, see Ben-Tov (2009).

Status Quaestionis

The Transmission and Preservation of Greek Learning

In modern scholarship, the Byzantine intelligentsia in fifteenth-century Italy have been studied mainly in the context of the transmission or preservation of Greek learning, as well as in the context of Greek identity after Byzantium. As “venerable scholars fleeing from Constantinople with the Greek classics under their arms”, they have been understood as protagonists in a narrative of cultural reawakening and revival of antiquity that dominates accounts of Italian humanism as well as the European Renaissance.³⁵ This image is surely compelling and even became popular: it resonates in books as diverse as Gibbon’s *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Friedrich Schöll’s history of Greek literature, Abel-François Villemain’s novel about the life of Constantine Lascaris (1837) and Colin Wells’ *Sailing from Byzantium* (2006).

In particular, historians of classical scholarship and Renaissance humanism studied the Byzantine intelligentsia in Italy in the context of their contribution to textual transmission. The emphasis on their role as transmitters of Greek learning is already apparent from the very first monographs on their lives and works, written by Humphrey Hody and Christian Friedrich Börner in the eighteenth century.³⁶ The titles of their pioneering essays frame the Byzantines as “*instauratores* of the Greek language” and tell us that they achieved the “*altera migratio* of Greek letters from Greece to Italy”.³⁷ Especially

35 Phrasing after Harris (2009).

36 Before Börner and Hody, and among others, Giovio (1577: 28–41) (cf. Giovio, ed. Meregazzi 1972: 56–64) dedicated a few pages to the Byzantine scholars of Italy in his *Elogia viro- rum illustrium* (first published in 1546), discussing Manuel Chrysoloras, Bessarion, George Trapezuntius of Crete, Theodore Gazes, John Argyropoulos, Michele Marullo, Demetrius Chalcondylas, Markos Mousouros and Ianus Lascaris.

37 Humphrey Hody (regius professor of Greek at Oxford from 1698) left a manuscript, posthumously published under the title *De Graecis illustribus linguae Graecae literarumque humaniorum instauratoribus* (Hody 1742). Before the publication of Hody’s work, Christian Friedrich Börner had earned his PhD with a thesis called *De altera migratione Graecarum litterarum de Graecia in Italiam*, followed a year later by an additional study on the subject (Börner 1704, 1705). At the end of his academic career, Börner issued a synthesis in 1750, *De doctis hominibus Graecis litterarum Graecarum in Italia instauratoribus liber*. These learned volumes are full of obscure knowledge and compile evidence concerning the life and works of the Greek protagonists of Greek learning (of course, some of this information is now out-dated, but as a goldmine of primary sources about the Greeks the books are still useful).

since the late nineteenth century, the philological and educational activities of the Byzantines in Italy have generated an impressive body of scholarship mapping their contribution to the preservation and dissemination of Greek learning in the West.³⁸ These works often take the form of monumental catalogues listing manuscripts, printed books, and Greek scribes,³⁹ or monographs keyed to the life and works of individual scholars.⁴⁰ Together these studies have contributed enormously to our knowledge about the ways in which Greek learning was disseminated, transmitted, and digested. They paint the Byzantines in Italy as ardent collectors of Greek manuscripts and diligent scribes; they show them at work as textual critics and reconstruct how they pieced together the first editions of our classics; they evoke them teaching their language to students from all over Europe.⁴¹ In other words, they reveal them as humanists in one Kristellerian sense of the word: as professional teachers,

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- 38 The main book-length studies on the Byzantines' role in the transmission and dissemination of Greek learning are by Geanakoplos (1962, 1965, 1976, 1987, 1989) and Monfasani (1995, 2004).
- 39 See Vogel and Gardthausen (1909) with Harlfinger (1974) (inventories of Greek scribes); Legrand (1885–1906) with Manoussakas and Staïkos (1986, 1987, 1989), Ladas and Chadzidimos (1976), and Iliou (1973) (inventories of books published by Greek editors during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries).
- 40 Classic examples include Henri Vast's studies on Ianus Lascaris and Bessarion (Vast 1878a, 1878b), Ludwig Mohler's monumental three-volume work on Cardinal Bessarion and his circle (Mohler 1923–42), Börje Knös' monograph on Ianus Lascaris (Knös 1945) as well as Giuseppe Cammelli's pioneering biographies of Manuel Chrysoloras, John Argyropoulos, and Demetrius Chalcondylas (Cammelli 1941–54). Some of these scholars have recently received renewed monograph-length attention. See, most notably, for Manuel Chrysoloras Thorn-Wickert (2006); for Bessarion Monfasani (2011b) and Bianca (1999); for Constantine Lascaris Martínez Manzano (1994, 1998), and for George Trapezuntius of Crete Monfasani (1976, 1984a).
- 41 Monfasani (2012: 58–71) offers helpful lists of émigré and visiting Byzantine copyists and teachers in the Renaissance. The most extensive accounts of how Renaissance humanists learned their Greek are Botley (2002, 2010), Ciccolella (2008), and Weiss (1977). For the contribution of Byzantine scholars to Greek studies in Italy, see esp. Ciccolella (2008: 118–49) with special emphasis on the Greek grammars of Manuel Chrysoloras, Theodore Gazes, and Constantine Lascaris (pp. 118–24) and on the teaching method of Michael Apostoles (pp. 146–49). For studies of the teaching, editing, and copying activities of individual scholars, I refer to the bibliographical references in notes 38–40 and the notes in the chapters.

transmitters, and disseminators of ancient erudition, devoted to the revival of antiquity.⁴²

Apart from the traditional European perspective on the Byzantines in Italy (focussing on the transmission and dissemination of Greek learning in the West), there is the traditional national Greek perspective. Historians of the Greek nation tend to look at the contribution of the Byzantine intelligentsia to the Greek nation and its cause. As narratives of national history usually celebrate national gain or progress and resist national loss,⁴³ historians writing from a national perspective stress that the Byzantine intelligentsia contributed to three different domains of national benefit, which often overlap in their accounts. Apart from the preservation of Greek heritage, they emphasise that the Byzantines in the Latin West engendered feelings of European philhellenism and galvanised support against the Ottoman Turks in order to liberate the Greeks. Vakalopoulos, to name just one, emphasised both the post-Byzantines' role in the preservation of the Hellenic heritage and their arousal of philhellenism in the West through "their literary and political earnestness, as well as the impact of their everyday discussions with foreigners".⁴⁴ Sometimes historians of the Greek nation even see the post-Byzantines as the very first example of people with "a modern sense of nationality".⁴⁵ On the other hand, the late-Byzantine move to the Latin West can also be understood in terms of national loss: by transferring Greek learning and manuscripts to the West, the Greek

42 Many surveys in particular emphasise the Byzantines' contribution to the revival of Greek learning and classical scholarship in the West. Such overviews are, in chronological order, Zakythinos (1954), Setton (1956), Hartmann (1958), Pertusi (1966), Geanakoplos (1984a, 1988), N. Barker (1985: 11–20), Vranoussis (1986), O.L. Smith (1991), Karamanolis (2003), Signes Codoñer (2003), Konstantinou (2006), Saribalidou and Vassileiou (2007), Cadafaz de Matos (2009), Bianca (2010), Monfasani (2012), and Gastgeber (2015).

43 See here Anagnostou (2010: 80), citing Laliotou (2004: 8).

44 Vakalopoulos (1970: 234–55, 263); Harris (1999: 190–91).

45 Vakalopoulos (1970: 257). See also Geanakoplos (1984b: 64), quoting Vakalopoulos with approval. After the founder of modern Greek historiography, Konstantinos Paparrigopoulos, Greek historians writing about the history of Hellenism discussed the role of the Byzantine intelligentsia in the above-mentioned four domains of national accumulation (see Zakythinos 1976 and Vakalopoulos 1961, 1970). Manoussos Manoussakas (1965) emphasised their role in the resistance against the Ottoman Turks, placing their crusade appeals in an unbroken chain of uprisings starting in 1453 and climaxing in the Greek Revolution (see also Vakalopoulos 1970: 256–63 with Irmscher 1961, 1964, 1976). Their role in the preservation of Hellenism during the Turkocracy was in particular underlined in the pioneering Greek studies of Sathas (1863) and Paranikas (1867) in addition to the work of Kournoutos (1956).

world lost a substantial part of its cultural and intellectual resources. Some therefore claimed that the Byzantine intelligentsia not only abandoned the faith of the Greeks, but also left their people uneducated, which is suggested by some contemporary Greek sources as well.⁴⁶

Traditional approaches to the Byzantine intelligentsia in Italy have been criticised for framing the Byzantine scholars too one-sidedly as instrumental to either a European or a national project. John Monfasani has emphasised that we should take into account the motives and outlooks of the Byzantine Greeks themselves.⁴⁷ Which texts did they read and study most intensively? In what ways, and under what assumptions, did they interpret their sources? How did their intellectual interests relate to those of their humanist colleagues in Italy? By carefully reconstructing the intellectual profiles of individual Byzantine scholars, and in particular Bessarion, Monfasani has been able to show that some of their intellectual predilections—most notably, their interest in Latin scholasticism—by no means reflect the interests of their humanist colleagues.⁴⁸ This sheds an entirely new light on the relation of Byzantine scholars to the humanist movement, especially those in the first generation of the Italian exile. Even though they were instrumental to humanism as teachers, translators, and copyists of Greek texts, and had to work in a decidedly humanist environment, they also had their own intellectual agendas and placed their own ‘Byzantine’ emphases on what they read and thought.⁴⁹

This book also starts from the perspective of the Byzantine Greeks themselves. Instead of focussing on their libraries, philological methods, and reading practices, however, it examines what they said about themselves. Without wanting to draw the contours of a specifically Greek intellectual culture in the fifteenth century, the present work shows how the Byzantine intelligentsia in Italy claimed the Greek heritage, placing this claim in the contexts of both the rather well-studied tradition of Byzantine Hellenism they broke with as well as the competing Latin points of view to which they had to respond. As such, it

46 Harris (2000a: 27).

47 Monfasani (2012: 35–36).

48 In particular, Monfasani (2012). Monfasani (2011b) is an excellent example of this line of research: he shows, for instance, that Bessarion's Latin library included 272 works from the Middle Ages and only eight original works by Latin humanists (Monfasani 2011: 1–26). See also Karamanolis (2003), who argues that we must try to look at the activities of the Byzantine intelligentsia in Italy as a specifically Greek branch of humanism.

49 This is particularly true the first generation of Byzantine scholars (that of Trapezuntius, Bessarion, and Argyropoulos). The second generation (that of Ianus Lascaris, Michele Marullo, and Markos Mousouros) were closer to more typically humanist concerns and interests.

takes into account their situation as Greeks in a Latin-dominated world, where they were in constant negotiation between ‘here’ and ‘there’, between their notion of the homeland and the reality of displacement.

Greek Identity after Byzantium

The problem of Greek identity after Byzantium is a much-debated issue, and a few pages cannot do justice to its complexity. Leaving aside the problems and nuances of each position, two approaches stand out as marking the extremities of the discussion. Especially in accounts of Greek national history, the Byzantine intelligentsia in Italy have been regarded as an integral part of the Hellenic nation, or community of *omogenia*.⁵⁰ Although the criteria of Greekness may shift, the underlying conception of identity of this ‘national’ school is normally a ‘hard’ one: identity is believed to be a fundamental predisposition or sameness, or even a deeper essence, that is the core of selfhood.⁵¹ The other extreme is represented by the modernist school and criticises the perennialist and essentialist assumptions of Greek nationalism. It essentially argues that Greek national identity is the exclusive product of modern nationalism and is, as such, an ethnopolitical construct.⁵² The underlying idea of identity is ‘soft’ or ‘weak’ and assumes that identity is either the product of social and political action or the “the evanescent product of multiple and competing discourses”, and is therefore fundamentally unstable, multiple, fluctuating, and fragmented.⁵³ In view of the fact that modernist approaches

50 Cf. Anagnostou (2010: 85).

51 Brubaker and Cooper (2000) distinguish between (1) identity as a fundamental predisposition effectively motivating social and political behaviour on a non-instrumental basis; (2) identity as a fundamental sameness among members of a group or category, understood objectively (as a sameness in itself) or subjectively (as an experienced sameness), and manifesting itself in solidarity, in shared dispositions, and consciousness, or in collective action; (3) identity as something allegedly deep, basic, abiding, or foundational, which must be distinguished from more superficial and contingent attributes of the self, i.e. a “core aspect of selfhood”.

52 I will not dwell on the axiomatic problems that haunt these two approaches, since these have been discussed in sufficient detail elsewhere. A clear discussion and criticism of both nationalist and modernist stances is in A.D. Smith (2000, 2009). The most recent criticism of modernist approaches to national identity with particular attention to early modernity is Hirschi (2012: 20–33). Convenient overviews of the nationalism theory debate from different perspectives are Grosby (2005), Ichijo and Uzelac (2005), and Lawrence (2005). See also Özkırımlı and Grosby (2007).

53 Brubaker and Cooper (2000: 8).

are confined to modernity, the Greek identity of the Byzantine intelligentsia in Italy has been mainly discussed from the nationalist perspective.

While nationalist interpretations often lift tiny bits of evidence out of their context in order to make huge claims about Greek national continuity, disregarding ruptures and breaks, modernists tend to omit sources from pre-modernity that might undermine their central tenet: that national identities are the exclusive products of modernity. The former overstate the implications of the sources; the latter ignore important evidence.⁵⁴ As the texts I studied for this book do not reflect or represent the voice of a coherent Greek people, they hardly allow for grand generalisations about 'Greek identity'. Viewpoints about what it meant to be a Greek were by no means uniform. The Conclusion will resume this point, since it emerged as a recurring theme throughout my research. At the same time, however, the sources studied for this book also strongly suggest that some strategies of identity formation that have often been regarded as typically 'nationalist' and 'modern' predate the comfort zone of mainstream modernism.

It was not my aim, however, to 'prove' the existence of Greek nationality in pre-modernity (as national historians often try to do) and even less to 'reveal' Greek identity to be a contingent construction (as a modernist critic would do). The principal questions I had in mind concerned how these Byzantine scholars saw their own Greekness and by what strategies they shaped and sustained it. This means that I avoided certainties about what 'Greek identity' is supposed to mean and continuously questioned the precise meaning of Greekness on the basis of what I found in the sources. One single example illustrates the need for such an 'open' and rigorously source-based—or philological—approach. In a review of the monumental *Charta of Greek Printing*, a critic wrote that "there is an unexplained elasticity [in the selection of authors and publishers] about who is and who is not a Greek".⁵⁵ According to the reviewer in question, it was unclear why the author of the *Charta* had included Michele Marullo in his selection since—he argued—the poet had been born in Italy from Greek parents, received a Latin education, and wrote Latin poems. Asking for such clear-cut criteria to include or exclude individuals *as Greeks* is both historically and conceptually problematic. The reviewer's critique implies a set of abiding criteria (in this case birthplace, education, and language) that may be valuable to the modern reviewer in question, but would have been less so to Marullo. Given the fact that the poet more than once emphatically called

54 Similar criticism of traditional approaches to Greek identity is voiced by Kaldellis (2014: 231–33).

55 Green (2001: 244).

himself, his ancestors, and his people Greeks and Pelasgians, his language Greek, and his fatherland Greece, we cannot simply deny that he was a Greek.⁵⁶ Although Marullo would have agreed with his being omitted from the *Charta* as a printer of Greek books (he never participated in printing), he would not have liked the idea of being bypassed as a Greek.

Looking at what Byzantines themselves have to say about what it meant to be a Greek, we must escape our “temporal provincialism”⁵⁷ and imagine a situation in which there were no full-blown ideologies of Greek nationalism, no sovereign nation state that governed in the name of all the Greeks, and generally no common education that infused Greek minds with a cogent idea of the nation.⁵⁸ In other words, we must accept that there was a principal elasticity about who was and who was not a Greek and explain it, rather than edit it out of the narrative.

In a seminal article, Jonathan Harris argued that, in Italy, Byzantines did not abandon “their own identity as Byzantines”, but on the contrary preserved “a great deal of their traditional Byzantine identity”, even if they “always described themselves as Greeks, never as Romans”.⁵⁹ The Hellenic heritage, according to Harris, played a major role in this. Quoting from the Greek letters of Cardinal Bessarion and Andronikos Kallistos, and citing the indirect evidence of Alexios Effomatos, Thomas Frank, and Laonikos Chalkokondyles, he argued that the notion of a common language and literary tradition enabled the Byzantines in Italy to cross social, political, and religious boundaries in order to identify with their fellows in the East and motivated them to pursue “objectives much wider than merely their own personal advancement”.⁶⁰ Indeed, the preservation of Greek literature and the liberation of Greece were high on the agenda of

56 According to Marullo, his native language was Greek (*H.* 2.8.1–4), his fatherland Greece (*E.* 2.32.109; cf. *E.* 3.50.7) or the “Inachian land” (“Inachium solum”, *E.* 2.17.1). He called himself “Graecus” (*H.* 2.8.3) or “Graiugena” (*E.* 2.32.101) and referred to his ancestors and compatriots as Greeks (*E.* 1.22.21, 3.37.40, *H.* 3.1.256, 4.1.20) or Pelasgians (*E.* 1.48.29, 3.29.1–3, 3.50.7; *H.* 3.1.275). He also defended Greek honour against detractors (*E.* 3.50). For the references to Marullo’s works, see Chapter 6, p. 201, n. 5.

57 See here Rice and Grafton (1994: 110).

58 This phenomenon is known as “retrospective nationalism” (A.D. Smith 1995: 22).

59 Harris (1999: 191, 200).

60 Harris (1999: 192). Harris (1999, 2000a) directly responds to Bryer (1991, 1996), who, on the basis of a letter of Cardinal Bessarion to George Amiroutzes, argued that the only grounds upon which Byzantine émigrés would have been able to identify with their fellows in the East was in the accident of shared birthplace. Harris justly amends the idea, implicit in Bryer’s conclusion, that Byzantine émigrés in the West abandoned all wider conceptions of a shared identity.

Byzantine émigrés like Cardinal Bessarion. Some of them moreover retained cultural features that were Byzantine rather than ‘humanist’, from the cultivation of a ‘Greek’ beard to an interest in Aristotelian scholasticism.

However, the ways in which they redefined themselves as Hellenes in particular also implied change and discontinuity: Byzantines in Italy constructed their Greekness in novel ways and drew on previously untapped sources. The ways in which they conceptualised the relationship between themselves and the ancient Hellenes were in many ways innovative without, however, implying a complete rejection of all aspects of their traditional identity. The complexities of their Greekness become visible if we include more sources in the analysis and look more closely at the various strategies the Byzantines employed to construct their self-image as “children of the Hellenes”. Additionally, the largest group of sources we have for this period addresses Latin or mixed Greco-Latin audiences. Apart from bridging the gap with the ‘Greeks’ in the East, constructions of Greekness also, if not primarily, responded to Latin views and expectations. In articulating their own views on their Greekness, the Byzantine Greeks in Italy accommodated but also criticised and rejected Latin perspectives on what it meant to be a Greek. This study is a first attempt to capture something of the complex cultural dynamics in which the Byzantines were caught when they reformulated traditional Hellenic identities.

This Book’s General Approach

The texts I studied for this book—chiefly written in Latin and Greek, but sometimes in Italian—were not always easy to find. Although the Byzantine Greeks were preoccupied with preserving the heritage of ancient Greece and their own Greekness, they did not write extensive Greek histories in the humanist fashion (which would be the first place to look for anyone interested in the problem under study).⁶¹ The only attested self-standing work of history reputedly composed by a Byzantine expatriate I know of is now lost,

61 They did contribute, on the other hand, to the historiography of the Ottoman Turks (as did Nikolaos Sekoundinos) or the Republic of Venice (as did Thomas Diplovatatus). On Thomas Diplovatatus see Ascheri (1971), Hortis (1905), H. Kantorowicz (1919), Koeppler (1936), and Mazzacane (2001). The best entry to Sekoundinos is Mastrodimitris (1970), but see also Babinger (1965). An edition of Sekoundinos’ history with introduction is in Philippides (2007a: 55–91).

except for seven pieces transmitted and translated third-hand.⁶² Additionally, other works of Greek history allegedly composed by Byzantine intellectuals appeared to be the shrewd inventions of 'Prince' Dimitrios Rhodokanakis who, in the nineteenth century, forged them in order to substantiate his claims to Roman imperial descent.⁶³ Despite this curious lack of history, I went through speeches, inaugural lectures, epigrammatic collections, letters, and invective treatises, as well as the paratexts of editions and translations of Greek classics that amply testify to their preoccupation with the classical tradition and with ancient Greece in particular. This wide range of textual sources required close attention to the particularities of literary genre, intertextuality, and historical context, which I have always taken into account as much as possible when I felt it would contribute to our understanding of particular instances of Greekness.

Given the polysemy of 'Greek' and the conceptual fluidity of 'identity', I adopted a critical stance to the notions of both Greekness and identity, combining a critical return (and in some case, turn) to the sources with interpretive tools and lenses made in the factories of memory studies and social theory. It might be tempting to see the texts under scrutiny as straightforward or unmediated expressions or reflexions of a stable and hard notion of Greek identity, taking for granted what 'Greek identity' means and projecting this back to the Renaissance. The notion of self-presentation, by contrast, allowed me to see the texts under study as communicating specific images or *personas* to particular audiences for specific purposes.⁶⁴ The image Goffman originally used to explain this idea is that of actors, who perform their situation-specific roles in

62 It concerns an allegedly lost historiographical work of Ianus Lascaris. See Braccini (2006) with the fragments on pp. 103–12. Constantine Lascaris' synopsis, surviving in BNE, Cod. Matr. 4621, offers a summary of George Monachos' ninth-century chronicle, enriched with a list of Byzantine emperors from Basil I (867) until Constantine XI, and an overview of the vicissitudes of the descendants of Manuel II Palaeologus (see Martínez Manzano 1998: 119–22). The *Chronicon maius* (which dates to 1580) was previously misattributed to George Sphrantzes but is now commonly seen as the work of Makarios Melissourgos-Melissenos, the metropolitan of Monemvasia (see Philippides 2008 with references).

63 Legrand (1895) and Kekule von Stradonitz (1908: 186–68).

64 In cultural and literary studies, 'self-presentation' (or the German 'Selbstdarstellung') is often used interchangeably with the much younger concept of 'self-fashioning'. The terms must be kept separate all the same. Self-presentation is a category from sociology and social psychology primarily associated with Erving Goffman's classic *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (1959). Self-fashioning was introduced by the cultural historian Stephen Greenblatt (1980) to capture the different issue of the creation of new forms of the self and subjectivity in Renaissance art and literature. For the background of Greenblatt's concept, see Pieters (2001: 39–65).

such a way as to strategically influence how their audience sees them.⁶⁵ While the dramaturgical interpretation of the original concept has been criticised for being too artificial to study interaction in modern everyday life, as it was originally intended, it is very helpful to understand the notably self-conscious mode of humanist writing, in which self-presentation plays a crucial role.⁶⁶ In this context, it is also useful to make a distinction between self-presentation as the social act or situation of representation and self-representation as the specific representation or image that results from this social act.⁶⁷ As I understand it, self-representations concern not only the self-image or *persona* individuals design but also the attributes to which they link this self-image (such as a certain in-group or a specific place).⁶⁸ In my analysis, the notion of self-representation often replaces the term ‘identity’, or ‘Greek identity’, as this notion has been used with so many meanings in so many domains within the humanities and social sciences that it has become a “heavily burdened, deeply ambiguous term” hardly capable of doing interpretive work without causing confusion.⁶⁹

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- 65 Goffman (1959). Self-presentation must be distinguished from psychological categories such as the self-concept or self-consciousness, which concern the individual's authentic beliefs about who he or she really is.
- 66 Note that Peter Burke argued that Goffman's notion of self-presentation is even more important for the study of the Mediterranean world in the past than it is for American society in the present and regards it as of “obvious relevance” for Renaissance Italy (Burke 2005: 49). The role of self-presentation and social identification in humanist letter writing is discussed particularly in Van Houdt et al. (2002). For the implications of the highly crafted and self-conscious mode of humanist writing for humanist autobiographical writing, see in particular Enenkel (2008).
- 67 Normally, self-presentation and self-representation are used interchangeably, both in the social sciences and in the humanities. In the humanities, the designations are sometimes distinguished, albeit to different ends. For example, Martin Huang refers to self-representation when an author discourses on his characters or “created self”, while he speaks of self-presentation when an author *explicitly* discourses on his own self (his “revealed self”) (Huang 1995: 48–49). As Huang understands both concepts as fundamentally intertwined, he consistently speaks of “self-re/presentation”.
- 68 Although they are usually used as synonyms, the notion of self-presentation is sometimes narrowed to refer to self-relevant images, while impression management is used to denote the strategic representations of other entities than the self (see for this distinction Leary and Kowalski 1990).
- 69 Brubaker and Cooper (2000: 8). In abandoning the concept of identity, I follow the pertinent criticisms of Brubaker and Cooper, who observe that in analyses of identity we often find a confusing conflation of constructivist vocabulary and essentialist argumentation (Brubaker and Cooper 2000: 7) and that the term covers the extremes of immutability and fluidity and everything in between (Brubaker and Cooper 2000: 35). For this reason

One of the principal, and at first sight most straightforward, ways of self-presentation is naming. Therefore, the names the Byzantine intelligentsia applied to themselves both in Greek and in other languages are always part of the analysis. In scholarship as much as in translation, the different names ‘Hellenes’, ‘Greeks’, and ‘Romans’ (or ‘Romaeans’) in the sources are often simply rendered as ‘Greeks’. In this way, modern readers are made utterly insensitive to the differentiated and evolving meanings attached to them.⁷⁰ The importance of the names the Byzantines used for themselves gains further significance against the background of the Latin tradition, which subsumed the differentiated set of labels the Byzantines used for themselves under the monolithic notion of *Graeci*.

One important effect of styling themselves Greeks is the sense of ‘groupness’ that emerges from this name. The self-declared Greeks of the diaspora often claimed to speak in name of *all* Greeks. Social theory has made me even more sensitive to the fact that, to be effective objects of study, groups need not necessarily be “mutually interacting, mutually oriented, effectively communicating, bounded collectiv[ies] with a sense of solidarity, corporate identity, and capacity for concerted action” (in other words, real).⁷¹ Group identifiers such as ‘Hellenes’ or the ‘Greek nation’ do not simply denote groups that exist ‘out there’, but also evoke or constitute them discursively, even in circumstances where no internally homogenous and externally bounded groups exist.⁷² For this reason, it is possible to speak of imagined groups or imagined communities.⁷³ Group names are deeply evaluative or even prescriptive. To present oneself as a ‘Greek’, therefore, not only describes who one is but also guides one’s attitudes as a member of the imagined group towards others while furnishing an

they argue (sensibly, in my view) that scholars may better employ “alternative analytical idioms that can do the necessary work without the attendant confusion” (see esp. Brubaker and Cooper 2000: 8–9, 14, 35–36). A useful discussion of the provenance of the word ‘identity’ is De Boer (2003).

70 Sharing this concern, Kaplanis (2014) offers a first quantitative study of the labels “Ἕλληνες, Γραικοί, and Ῥωμαῖοι in Greek sources from the 10th to the 17th century as far as they are available in the *TLG*.”

71 The definition of Brubaker (2004: 12).

72 Cf. Brubaker (2004: 7–27).

73 The term ‘imagined community’ was famously coined by Benedict Anderson (1983), but in his usage the term implies a political community that is imagined as “inherently limited and sovereign”. Even so, the idea is not restricted to political communities in this sense and can be applied to various kinds of groups, for which see in particular Brubaker (2004). A recent critique of Anderson’s concept is Hirschi (2012: 20–33).

evaluation of the group to which one subscribes.⁷⁴ As self-declared Greeks, the Byzantine intelligentsia constituted an imagined group (or in-group) that they often defined vis-à-vis other groups (so-called out-groups), especially the Latins and the Ottoman Turks, in order to create a sense of positive distinctiveness that would favourably demarcate their in-group from the out-group.⁷⁵

Apart from evoking a sense of groupness, the Greek name also suggested a particularly strong and privileged connection with the ancient Greeks. Naturally, names are not used in a vacuum, and they are usually part of an attempt to legitimise wider claims. Even though the Byzantine intelligentsia did not produce full-blown histories of the Greeks or Byzantium, their texts abound with strategies to give substance to their Greekness, and adopting the name of the ancient Hellenes was part of their wider effort to claim back the ancient Greek heritage for themselves. Apart from the 'language of kinship', this included the creation of a sense of continuity or *quasi-continuity* between the ancient past and the present, by means of strategies of 'mnemonic pasting'. Continuity or 'quasi-contiguity' is achieved by 'tying' or 'pasting' a series of events, places or persons from different moments in the past together, for example by merging originally unrelated events (known as 'lumping') into a progressive narrative structure (a plot or myth), which sometimes also involves separating traditionally related events to form a new narrative ('splitting'). In addition to such strategies of 'mnemonic pasting', I will look at the *kind* of Greekness the Byzantine intelligentsia had in mind when they selected, omitted, emphasised, and obfuscated events, places, and persons in their representation of the ancient Hellenes and their past.⁷⁶

The use of naming, the language of kinship, and the evocation of continuity with the ancient Greek past all belong to what has been called the

74 Hogg, Terry, and White (1995: 259–60).

75 Among sociologists, there is debate about the motivation for such distinctiveness. There are two main schools. The founding fathers of social identity theory argued that in-group favouritism is motivated by value and status advantages for the in-group (Tajfel and Turner 1986). More recent research stresses that security motives rather than self-enhancement underlie in-group favouritism and speaks of "optimal distinctiveness" as the aim of social identification (e.g. Brewer, Leonardelli, and Pickett 2010). For some similarities and differences between social identity theory and identity theory, see Hogg, Terry, and White (1995).

76 My mnemonic terminology in these lines mainly relies on Eviatar Zerubavel (2003: 25–27, 29–31, 52–54, 61, 86–88). A concise critical overview of recent memory studies and its main debates is in Koning (2007: 2–7). When representations of the past are used for purposes in the present, we often speak of intentional history (Gehrke 2001: 285) or usable pasts (Anagnostou 2009).

“internal moment of identification”: the way in which individuals present themselves and ‘offer’ their self-images or *personas* to their audience. These are not created in a vacuum but respond to the perceived expectations of the audience, which will in turn accept, reject, or try to change or modify them.⁷⁷ Expounding upon Goffman’s initial dramaturgical model, Richard Jenkins called this the “external moment of identification”. The few previous case studies of Byzantine identity in Italy have chiefly focused on the internal moment but have paid little if any attention to the external moment.⁷⁸ The external moment of identification is relevant here, especially since much of what the Byzantine intelligentsia in Italy had to say about themselves was aimed at a Latin audience, directly or indirectly. The Greekness that the Latins assigned to the Byzantine Greeks entailed notoriously conflicting connotations, ranging from outspokenly positive qualities (such as cultural prestige and wisdom) to prejudicial bias that implied stereotyping, stigmatisation, and even social exclusion (such as the notion that the Greeks were inherently hostile to the Latins).⁷⁹ Byzantine Greeks had to anticipate, refute, or enforce such images and thus negotiated their sense of Greekness with an eye on both their own interests and the concerns of their audience. For this reason, it is not difficult to see how important the external moment of identification was for the ways in which Greekness was conceptualised, especially since the Byzantine intelligentsia were in a position of relative dependence on their hosts.⁸⁰

In order to understand why the Greeks of the diaspora largely cut ties with the Roman tradition of Byzantium and constructed a new sense of Greekness, we must think in terms of the specific functions Greekness could have for them in various situations. Apart from the fact that in Byzantium there had already been attempts to forge a Hellenic alternative to traditional Romanness,⁸¹ the

77 See Jenkins (2004: 15–26, 68–78).

78 Harris (1999, 2000a), Glaser (2006). See also the Introduction, pp. 17–18.

79 The total sum of positive and negative stereotypes attached to a group typically amounts to a complex and often internally conflicting image, which is called the ‘image’ of a group. See on this Leerssen (2000: 278–80). The historically contextualised study of modern national images is imagology, on which see in particular Leerssen (2006a, 2000). For an introduction to the field, see also the contributions in Beller and Leerssen (2007: 3–75). The term ‘stigma’ was introduced by Goffman (1963).

80 Although his focus lies elsewhere, the Italian audience is recognised as important by Glaser (2006: 202–03), who took a group of seventeenth-century Greek Catholics associated with the St. Athanasios College in Rome to illustrate how they developed an alternative identity for their compatriots besides their strictly Hellenic one.

81 The most extensive treatment of the transformation of Hellenism and its relation to traditional Romanness is Kaldellis (2007).

specific contexts in which the Byzantine Greeks in Italy constructed their Greekness are decidedly important. During my research, I found that Greekness was evoked in various contexts and for specific purposes. Sometimes it served to impress, sometimes to conciliate the Latins, in which cases it usually accommodated Latin viewpoints and expectations. However, on other occasions, Greekness is more aggressively exclusive, marking off the Greeks as superior to the Latins. Hellenocentrism in various forms is indeed omnipresent and often disrupts cooperative relations between Latins and Greeks. Sometimes it was a means for the Greeks to preserve at least a *cultural* form of prestige. In the fifteenth century, the main ingredient of collective honour was a group's antiquity (often associated with a strong sense of cultural primacy and, therefore, superiority). This makes it easy to see that the link with the ancient Greeks was an important asset for the Byzantine diaspora. In other contexts, Greekness served to refute Latin claims to cultural supremacy, fuelled by the achievements of Italian humanism. It finally also helped to create a sense of communal belonging, which was otherwise not easy to achieve in the fragmented Greek world of the period.

Outline of the Book

The first two chapters form the first part of the book and sketch the background and the context of the Greekness of the Byzantines in Italy. The first chapter places their Greekness in the context of the Byzantine tradition, in order to show that it was exceptional but not unprecedented in the Greek-speaking world. Nevertheless, it avoids speaking about the 'roots' of Greekness in Byzantium, since the influences are often very difficult to trace, and individual contexts seem to play a considerable role in constructions of Greekness. Moreover, the general context in which the Byzantine intelligentsia in Italy constructed their Greekness was very much unlike the situation in which men such as Manuel Chrysoloras, Gemistos Plethon, and Laonikos Chalkokondyles—each in their own way distinct—formulated their views on Byzantine Greekness in Eastern contexts. The second chapter therefore discusses the immediate context of Byzantine Greekness in Italy, focussing particular attention on what Jenkins called the 'external moment' of self-presentation and the ways in which the Byzantine Greeks responded to perceptions the Latins had of them. Unlike most previous discussions, it does not list the specific stereotypes individual Italian humanists applied to the Greeks, but focuses instead on the cultural attitudes behind them, as well as how these changed during the course of the century. The second chapter principally shows that in Italy, Greekness was

largely also an *assigned* identity that the Byzantines adopted, though not without manipulating it in favour of their own agendas. Drawing attention to the conflicts and tensions between the Greek and Latin perspectives, I suggest that we can best look at the Greekness of the Byzantine intelligentsia not in terms of a straightforward 'imposition' of a Greek identity but in terms of a negotiation over what it meant to be a *Graecus*.

Although the Byzantine intelligentsia in Italy commonly called themselves Greeks, the ways in which each individual *Graecus* worked out his Greekness in specific contexts were diverse. The second part of this book attempts to bring out this diversity by trying to understand the Greekness of individual figures on their own terms. Unlike previous accounts of Greek identity in the Byzantine diaspora, often focussing on one author or text, and mostly eliding differences between authors, the second part of this book explores individual constructions of Greekness in five case studies that variously illuminate the different ways in which Byzantine Greeks shaped their Greekness in Italy. Each chapter takes one or more texts by one or two authors and puts them in a new light. The selection of these case studies was not intended to be exhaustive, and the material itself restricted the selection of authors and texts. While John Argyropoulos, for instance, is a major figure in the cultural history of Quattrocento Italy and the Greek diaspora, he said disappointingly little about his Greekness, which makes him less relevant to the purpose of this book. The chief objective of my selection was to expand historical discourse rather than to reflect all possible positions.

Most of the texts discussed have been mined for bits and pieces of information, but I will discuss them, remembering Simon Goldhill, as cultural artefacts that perform a role for individuals in the articulation of their sense of being Greek.⁸² Apart from contributing to our general understanding of Byzantine Greekness in Italy, these five case studies also deepen our comprehension of the role it played in the life and works of some individual protagonists of Greek learning, as well as those of some lesser-known figures. They clear the mist surrounding the Greekness of some of these figures, while they also destabilise certainties that do not rest on evidence. Each individual chapter explores the strategies that various authors used to create a sense of contiguity with the ancient Greek past, as well as the functions their claims to continuity fulfilled in the specific contexts of their articulation. In addition, each chapter in its own way deals with how individual Greeks represented their own role in the preservation, transfer, and restoration of the Greek heritage, since these processes were at the heart of their sense of Greekness.

82 Goldhill (2002: 20).

The first three chapters together show three very different uses of the notion of Greekness as well as the role of the Greeks in past and present. In all chapters, moreover, the preservation, transfer, and restoration of the Greek heritage is shown in a different light. The third chapter shows that for Cardinal Bessarion there was a direct link between the preservation of Greek culture and the maintenance of Greek freedom, which he defined variously according to the changing historical circumstances of the Greeks. Bessarion's exceptionally articulate views on his own Greekness and its relation to the Roman tradition of Byzantium give ideological coherence to his views on Hellenism. As scholarship has chiefly focused attention on the rather superficial physical features of the cardinal's 'Greek identity' (such as his beard and his Basilian dress), Bessarion's views on his own Greekness and their implications have not received sufficient attention when they were discussed at all. Introducing the notion of Hellenocentrism, the fourth chapter shows how George Trapezuntius of Crete used Greekness as a social category, not only to identify himself but also to frame his own and others' behaviours and commitments. While his notion of Greekness was principally secular, he eventually tended to 'sacralise' it by placing the Greeks in his personal, strongly anti-Platonic vision of providential history. While Bessarion's vision of the Greek heritage was inclusive and holistic, Trapezuntius' was selective and strongly anti-Platonic in particular. The fifth chapter explores how Ianus Lascaris represented the transmission of Greek learning as God's mission for the Greeks and its preservation as a duty of the Latins. Focussing on a speech he delivered in Florence in 1493, the chapter shows how Lascaris tried to create a kind of cultural ecumenism for Greeks and Latins that started from the idea that the Latins were essentially barbarised Hellenes. In this way, he tried to find a model allowing him to share his Greek heritage with the Latins without losing 'possession' of it. Resuming the notion of Hellenocentrism, and placing Lascaris' construction and use of Greekness in the context of competing Latin views, it shows that Lascaris did not reckon with the cultural sensibilities of his Italian audience sufficiently for his project to be successful.

The last two chapters discuss constructions of Greekness outside the immediate context of Greek learning, even though they also deal with issues of preserving, transferring, and restoring the Greek heritage, or the perceived impossibility thereof. They also show that the object of transferral, preservation, or restoration is not always a pre-determined and well-defined 'legacy'. Taking as a starting point the Latin poetry of Michele Marullo and Manilio Cabacio Rallo, the sixth chapter shows how Marullo did not so much 'transfer' or 'preserve' a pre-conceived Greek heritage or material cultural archive but created his own vision of the Greek legacy in Latin. His comrade Manilio Rallo,

by contrast, dramatically denied his own Greekness, denied his own role in the transmission and preservation of Greekness, and suggested that Greekness was unthinkable without a living Hellenism in Greece. This chapter in this way also addresses the problematic relationship between Greekness, Hellenism, and Latinity. Centred on the problem of the territoriality of Hellenism, the seventh and final chapter shows how a notion of the fatherland or *Graecia* was created outside the context of Hellenism, through a Latin lens. In particular, it explores in some detail how Giovanni Gemisto tried to 'restore' a Greece that had in fact never existed by piecing together the very first politico-territorial image of Greece before the rise of nationalism and Philhellenism in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

A Conclusion that draws out the common threads running through the chapters and ties them to other threads leading to further research concludes the volume.

A Hellenic Alternative: The Emergence of Greekness in Byzantium

In the fifteenth century, a more outspoken form of Greekness emerged alongside traditional Hellenism (for the distinction, see the Introduction, pp. 2–3), and this was particularly apparent in the Greek diaspora in Italy. This chapter briefly introduces the emerging Greekness of the Byzantine intelligentsia in Italy against the background of the Byzantines' traditional views on the Hellenes and the ways it changed, especially in the fifteenth century. Of course, it cannot cover the fifteenth century extensively, nor fill the virtual two-century gap between circa 1300 and 1500 in the modern scholarship regarding Hellenism in the Byzantine world.¹ For that reason alone, it is confined to sketching those evolutions in late-Byzantine views on Greekness in the fifteenth century that help us to see the Hellenism of the Byzantine intelligentsia in Italy both against the background of traditional Byzantine Hellenism and as part of the wider cultural movement of 'radical' Hellenism originating in Byzantium. In particular, this chapter will first focus on three figures who worked in very different contexts but nevertheless articulated clear views on Greekness and Hellenism: Manuel Chrysoloras, a diplomat in the Latin West, a Roman convert, and the first Byzantine professor of Greek in Europe; the philosopher George Gemistos Plethon, who devised a Hellenic community as an alternative to Roman Byzantium; and Plethon's student Laonikos Chalkokondyles, who after the fall of Constantinople turned the views of his master into a historical narrative about the decline of Byzantium and the rise of the Turks. The views of Chrysoloras, Plethon, and Chalkokondyles show not only that an emergent Greekness was anticipated in late Byzantium, but also that it was not restricted to Byzantines in Italy and emerged in different historical and cultural contexts. By scrutinising the names they applied to themselves and each other, the second part of the chapter shows that, in Italy, the Byzantine intelligentsia adopted the Hellenic alternative and abandoned the traditional claim of the Byzantines to be called *Ῥωμαῖοι*.

1 The most recent studies are Page (2008) and Kaldellis (2007).

Dangerous Grounds: The Hellenic Alternative in Byzantium

The people we now call Byzantines traditionally saw themselves as the inheritors of the Roman Empire, referring to themselves as Ῥωμαῖοι (Romans) and to their country as Rhomaïs.² For these Romans of the East, the Hellenes had traditionally been a foreign people whose language they imitated, whose rhetorical theory they studied and applied, and whose philosophy they scrutinised through the lens of scriptural truth.³ But they were a *foreign* people, and the study of their language and culture was ‘learning from outside’ (θύραθεν παιδεία) in contradistinction to ‘our learning’ (ἡμέτερα παιδεία) or Christian theology (a distinction canonically formulated by Basil the Great). As Romans, therefore, the Byzantines looked at the Greek heritage as something external and foreign that had to be studied with utmost caution. In Byzantine sources, therefore, we find ‘Hellenes’ to refer to (a) geographically, the inhabitants of the area of mainland Greece or, more specifically, the Byzantine province of Hellas;⁴ (b) historically, the ancient Greeks, perceived as a remote and foreign people of the past; (c) linguistically, those who had received education in the Greek classics (παιδεία) and, through imitation, spoke and wrote in the language of the ancient Greeks; and (d) religiously, those who adhered either to the religious beliefs of the Hellenes or to any other religion considered non-orthodox, so that the word became a shortcut-term for pagans without reference to language, origin, or conviction. If the Byzantines called themselves ‘Hellenes’—which they generally avoided—they did so in order to emphasise their competence in ancient Greek and their knowledge of ancient Greek literature, both secular and Christian. In this sense, the word ‘Hellene’ served to distinguish the intellectual elite from the majority of the population, which was not trained in classical oratory, poetry, and philosophy. In some contexts, therefore, it served the

2 The bibliography on this topic is huge. For an extensive bibliography on the subject I refer to Kaldellis (2007: 411–52) and Kaldellis (2012a) in the notes. For a very short and accessible overview on the Roman label throughout Byzantine history, see Evangelos Chrysos’ entry in *CT* s.v. “Rhomaioi”. For the complex history of the ethnonym ‘Hellene’ and its relation to other identifiers, see esp. Jüthner (1923), Mauroeidi-Ploumide (1984), Hunger (1987), Christou (1991), Kaplanis (2014), and Papadopoulou (2014). For brief overviews, see Chrysos’ entry in *CT* s.v. “Hellenes” and Jonathan Hall’s entry in *EGHT* s.v. “Hellenes”. For the emergence of the Hellenic label in antiquity, see most notably J. Hall (2002: 125–71).

3 Cf. De Vries-Van der Velden (2011: 110).

4 Until the fourteenth century, Hellas generally signified the parts of the Greek peninsula north of the Peloponnesus (Attica, Boeotia, Aetolia, and Acarnania), but for subsequent authors it might include the Peloponnesus as well (Runciman 1952: 25). On the issue of imagining Greece before Greece see also Chapter 7.

elite of Constantinople to dissociate themselves from the provincials, despising them for their lack of Attic Greek and their less sophisticated knowledge of ancient Greek language and literature.⁵ On another level, it served the elite to create a sense of cultural superiority vis-à-vis a threatening and barbarian other, either the Turks or the Latins.⁶

In Byzantium, the notion of Greekness (or the idea of belonging to a community of Hellenes with its roots in the ancient Greek past) was restricted to specific moments and to small groups or eccentric individuals. In different philosophical and literary constellations, cultural Hellenism emerged with particular intensity in the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries.⁷ Cultural Hellenism was particularly intense during the thirteenth century, and especially in the Empire of Nicaea (one of the successor states that emerged after the Latin conquest of Byzantium in 1204), where intellectuals emphasised their privileged access to Hellenic learning.⁸ Although the Byzantine intelligentsia saw themselves as Hellenes, culturally speaking, Theodore II Lascaris (1254–58) has been regarded as the first Byzantine to use Hellenism not to define a Roman elite against other Romans, but as the substance of collective pride.⁹ Intensifying opposition to the Latin West very probably inspired the more emphatic Hellenism of this period, climaxing in the aftermath of the Fourth Crusade (1202–04), when Latin troops trampled Constantinople and established a Latin Empire that lasted until Michael VIII Palaeologus recovered Constantinople in 1261. As the Latins had their own claims to a Roman tradition, the Byzantine Romans had to readdress their own Romanness. It was their Hellenism that could distinguish them from the Latin Romans, who could not lay claim to this cultural legacy even if they now claimed the mantle of Roman power in the East. Importantly, however, this Hellenism did generally not replace the Byzantines' traditional Romanness—as it did in the fifteenth century and especially in Italy—but rather redefined it, explaining and explicating what kind of Romans the Byzantines were.¹⁰

In the following centuries, and particularly in the later fourteenth and in the first half of the fifteenth, intellectuals in Byzantium continued to refer to themselves as Hellenes, even if they did not stop calling themselves Romans.

5 Harris (1999: 195); Page (2008: 49–51).

6 Kaldellis (2007: 295–301, 334–88).

7 The history of Hellenism in Byzantium is traced in most detail in Kaldellis (2007).

8 Angold (1975). Cf. Browning (1983: 124; 1989: 17–20).

9 For analysis and discussion of Theodore Lascaris' case, see Kaldellis (2007: 372–79).

10 This evolution is most elaborately discussed by Kaldellis (2007: 317–88).

It is difficult to say why this happened. It has been argued that the intensified use of the Hellenic terminology can be explained by the fact that Roman ecumenism no longer lived up to the socio-economic and political realities of the fifteenth century.¹¹ From this perspective, the Byzantines exchanged their imperial Romanness for Hellenism because the latter matched the smaller and almost homogeneously Greek state in which they found themselves. This is a powerful historical argument, yet it is not entirely unproblematic. To name the most important problem, this argument presupposes that, in the later fourteenth and early fifteenth century, the Romans of the East defined themselves in terms of a transcendent religious-imperial community. This assumption, however, has been called into question.¹² If it is true that the Byzantine Romans saw their own community more in terms of a Roman nation than in terms of a universal empire, we must reconsider the idea that their Romanness was by definition out of line with historical 'national' realities. Moreover, only a very small portion of the Byzantine community adopted this way of being Greek and an even smaller number replaced its Romanness with it.

On the other hand, it is clear that—with the important exceptions of George Gemistos Plethon and perhaps also his student Laonikos Chalkokondyles—the Hellenic identifier was used especially by Byzantine *Latinophrones*, who often settled in the Latin West or in the Latin-ruled parts of the Greek-speaking world. This suggests another explanation for the emphasis on Hellenism in some circles in Byzantium, which would also account for the small number of self-declared Hellenes. As the *Latinophrones* had to accept that the real Romans lived in the Latin West and were less attached to the Orthodox Patriarchate, they turned to the legacy of ancient Greece to forge a new sense of communal belonging. They could call themselves Hellenes or Greeks, as they were called in the Latin West (see Chapter 2, pp. 64–72). Since Ἕλληνες had the cultural prestige Γραικοί lacked, it was obvious that some of them would adopt the Hellenic terms. As we shall see, however, this was not so for all later Byzantine intellectuals: the most 'radical' Hellenes of the fifteenth century, Gemistos Plethon and Laonikos Chalkokondyles, were not interested in adopting Latin points of view on who the Byzantines were. This shows that we must be very careful to avoid generalising or monocausal explanations for why some Byzantines identified with the ancient Greeks, and prompts us to review carefully the individual sources within their individual contexts.

11 Runciman (1970: 17–23).

12 See, in particular, Kaldellis (2012a).

The Greco-Romanism of Manuel Chrysoloras

Even when the Byzantine intelligentsia regarded themselves as Hellenes, they did not work out a theory of how they could be Romans and Greeks at the same time. Questions such as where the Hellenes had been during the previous two millennia or how a people could be Hellenes and Romans at the same time remained unanswered.¹³ Exceptions are scarce. At the beginning of the fifteenth century, Manuel Chrysoloras articulated his own view on who the Byzantines were.¹⁴ Chrysoloras' case is particularly interesting because, as the very first Byzantine professor to hold a Western European chair of Greek, in Florence from 1397 until 1400, he anticipated the more large-scale move of Byzantine intellectuals from East to West. Just like the later Byzantine intelligentsia in Italy, he dealt with the Latins intensively, not only as a teacher, but also as a diplomat on various occasions. His presence in the Latin West, as well as his sympathy for and eventual conversion to the Church of Rome, contributed to the improvement of the image of Byzantium in the West, even though it could not take away bias and prejudice (see Chapter 2, pp. 86–90).

Chrysoloras explained his views in a letter he wrote in about 1414 to Emperor Manuel II Palaeologus:

Let us remember from what men we are descended. If someone would like, he could say that we descended from the first and age-old, I mean from the most venerable and ancient Hellenes (no one has remained ignorant of their power and wisdom). If you please, you could also say that we descended from those who came after them, the ancient Romans, after whom we are now named and who we, I suppose, claim to be, so that we even almost erased our ancient name [i.e. of the Hellenes]. Rather both of these races came together in our times, I think, and whether someone calls us Hellenes (Ἕλληνες) or Romans (Ῥωμαῖοι), that is what we are, and we safeguard the succession of Alexander and that of those after him.¹⁵

13 Cf. Kaldellis (2007: 378–79) and Vryonis (1991: 9).

14 The classic study on Chrysoloras is Cammelli (1941a). The most recent comprehensive studies on Chrysoloras are Thorn-Wickert (2006) and the contributions in Maisano and Rollo (2002), which appeared after they could be included in the concise but useful bibliography in Jonathan Harris' entry in *EGHT* s.v. "Chrysoloras, Manuel". N.G. Wilson (2000: 9–15) offers an assessment of Chrysoloras' contribution to Greek studies in Renaissance Italy.

15 “Μεμνώμεθα οἷων ἀνδρῶν ἔχγονοι γεγόναμεν· Εἰ μὲν βούλοιτό τις, λέγοι τῶν προτέρων καὶ ἀρχαιοτέρων, λέγω δὴ τῶν πρεσβυτάτων καὶ παλαιῶν Ἑλλήνων, ὧν τῆς δυνάμεώς τε καὶ σοφίας οὐδεὶς ἀνήκοος μεμένηκεν. Εἰ δὲ βούλει, τῶν μετ’ ἐκείνους γενομένων ἡμῖν προγόνων, τῶν

Chrysoloras is ambiguous about the nature of continuity between the Hellenes and Romans and the Byzantines in these lines. Although he uses the words “ἔκγονοι” (children, descendants) to refer to the ‘us, the Byzantines’ and “πρόγονοι” (forefathers, ancestors) to refer to the Greeks and Romans, he also seems to define the continuity between Byzantine present and the Romans as well as the Greeks in political rather than ethnic terms (note here the use of the term “διαδοχή”).¹⁶ He identifies with a Greco-Roman synergy that Constantinople best exemplified for him. “The two most powerful and intelligent peoples”, Chrysoloras explained in his more famous *Comparison between Old and New Rome*, “(the one ruling at the time, the other having ruled immediately before, both adorned with every art, ambition, and splendour: Romans and Greeks), constructed this city after joining forces, and used all other peoples and their own resources to serve it”.¹⁷

The idea that the Byzantines were somehow a mixture of Greeks and Romans resonates in the curious hybrid word Ῥωμέλληνες (Romellenes), later used by Isidore of Kiev in a eulogy for Manuel and John VIII Palaeologus.¹⁸ Isidore

παλαιῶν Ῥωμαίων, ἀφ’ ὧν νῦν ὀνομαζόμεθα καὶ οἱ δῆπου ἀξιούμεν εἶναι, ὥστε καὶ τὴν ἀρχαίαν ὀνομασίαν σχεδὸν ἀποβαλεῖν. Μᾶλλον δὲ ἅμφω τούτῳ τῷ γένει ἐφ’ ἡμῖν δῆπου συνελήλυθε καὶ εἴτε Ἑλλήνας βούλοισι τις λέγειν εἴτε Ῥωμαίους, ἡμεῖς ἐσμέν ἐκεῖνοι καὶ τὴν Ἀλεξάνδρου δὲ καὶ τῶν μετ’ ἐκείνων ἡμεῖς σώζομεν διαδοχήν” (Chrysoloras, ed. Patrinelis 2001: 117, ll. 4–13). The punctuation has been adapted. We should perhaps read ἂν between “λέγοι” and “τῶν προτέρων”. “Those after him” (“τῶν μετ’ ἐκείνων”) may refer either to the Romans or to the Hellenistic monarchs. As Chrysoloras here makes the point that the Byzantines are both Hellenes and Romans, it seems most likely that he refers to the Romans, who eventually succeeded Alexander as leaders of a world empire.

- 16 Chrysoloras (ed. Patrinelis 2001: 41–44). On the dating of the letter, see Patrinelis (1972: 499). The text was recognised as an original composition of Chrysoloras by Christos Patrinelis in 1972 in the Monastery of Metamorphosis at Meteora (Cod. 154) and published in a critical edition in 2001. On the title and function of the text, see Chrysoloras (ed. Patrinelis 2001: 38–39, 50). On the identification of the text as Chrysoloras’, see Patrinelis (1972: 498–99). The text is available in the edition of Patrinelis (2001), with an introduction on pp. 9–34 followed by an English translation on pp. 35–57. See also Dagron (2001: 786) and Rollo (2002: 64) who were not able to consult the edition of Patrinelis (but cf. Maltezos 2006: 100).
- 17 “Δύο γὰρ τὰ δυνατώτατα καὶ φρονιμώτατα ἔθνη, τὸ μὲν τότε ἄρχον, τὸ δὲ εὐθὺς ἄρξαν πρὸ ἐκείνου, καὶ πάσῃ τέχνῃ καὶ φιλοτιμίᾳ καὶ ἀβρότῃ κομῶντα, Ῥωμαῖοι τὲ καὶ Ἕλληνες, συνελθόντα ταύτην πεποιήκασιν καὶ πᾶσι δὲ τοῖς ἄλλοις ἔθνεσιν καὶ τοῖς ἐκείνων εἰς αὐτὴν ἐχρήσαντο πρὸς ὑπηρεσίαν” (Chrysoloras, ed. Billò 2000: 17, ll. 20–4, §38).
- 18 Isidore (ed. Lambros 1926: 152, l. 17). The author was identified by G. Mercati (1926: 6–7) whose thesis was adopted by Philippides (2007b: 370, n. 75). The term ‘Romellenes’ prefigures the attempts of nineteenth-century Greek historians to come to terms with the Byzantine past of the Greek nation (Argyropoulos 2001: esp. 30–32).

asserted that Constantine the Great had united the best Romans and the best Hellenes in Constantinople in order to produce the best *genos* on earth. These people were the ‘Romellenes’.¹⁹ This usage was, however, by no means common, and there is some later evidence suggesting that for some more traditional Byzantines the term had a negative meaning. When, circa 1464, Michael Apostoles addressed Bessarion to inform the Roman cardinal about the difficulties he experienced from the Orthodox population of Crete, he wrote that Greeks would not let their children come to his school because they feared that his education would transform them into exactly this: ‘Romellenes’.²⁰

Unlike thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Hellenism, Chrysoloras’ Greco-Romanism did not originate in his contempt for and opposition to the Latin West. Chrysoloras was very much committed to improving the relations between Latins and Greeks, serving as an ambassador of the Byzantine emperor to the Latin West more than once. The shared Roman heritage of Byzantines and Greeks had sometimes been evoked to bridge the gap between the two peoples. Chrysoloras’ mentor Demetrios Kydones, for example, had tried to persuade the Romans of Byzantium to accept the Latins as fellow Romans and improve their relations with them. In a memorandum of 1366, he claimed that both Roman and Orthodox Christians were ultimately Romans: they were one people or “*δῆμος*”. According to him, Rome and Constantinople were one, arranged after the model of metropolis and colony.²¹ His student Manuel Kalekas applied a similar strategy to an Italian addressee, when he wrote to Iacopo Angeli in Florence that they actually shared a fatherland: Constantinople and Florence had both been established by Romans, to which he added that the Romans had originally been Greeks, an idea he probably found in Dionysius of Halicarnassus.²² Chrysoloras, however, applied a different strategy showing his superior sensitivity to Latin sensibilities. Due to his frequent diplomatic contacts with the Latin West, he must have been aware that Latins would not accept a shared Roman heritage with the Byzantines, whom they regarded as Greeks, not Romans (see also Chapter 2, pp. 64–72).

19 Isidore (ed. Lambros 1926: 151–52, esp. 152, ll. 8–12).

20 M. Apostoles (ed. Stefec 2013: 104, ll. 20–23).

21 Kydones (ed. Migne 1866: 977), with Siniossoglou (2011: 349).

22 “...ὅτι καὶ τῆς αὐτῆς...κοινωνοῦμεν πατρίδος. τῆς τε γὰρ σῆς “Ἑλληνες ἐξ ἀρχῆς οἰκισταὶ Ῥωμαῖοι λέγονται γεγονέναι, τὴν τε ἡμετέραν πολλοῖς ὕστερον χρόνοις τῶν αὐτῶν ἀποικον ἴσμεν” [... *that we also share the same fatherland... since the Romans (originally Greeks) are said to have inhabited your fatherland, while we know that much later our own fatherland became a colony of theirs*] (Kalekas, ed. Loenertz 1950: 257, ll. 1–5).

Chrysoloras' notion of a Greco-Roman synergy in particular helped him to relate to the Romans of the West. A letter by Chrysoloras to the Florentine chancellor Coluccio Salutati best illustrates this. When he wrote to the chancellor (who had invited him to accept a Greek professorship in Florence), he congratulated Salutati on his recent Latin translation of Plutarch. Chrysoloras argued that Plutarch was particularly relevant because his work showed so well "how close a connection (κοινωνία) in all respects had once existed between the people of the Hellenes and that of the Italians".²³ To explain this close connection, Chrysoloras pointed to the sacred and secular practices Italians and Greeks had shared. He claimed that they not only celebrated the same gods, but also shared their stories (or speech) and education "as if they wanted, if possible, to merge totally (συμφύναί)".²⁴ Rather than indicating a shared Roman heritage, Chrysoloras tactically evoked the Greco-Roman synergy he found in Plutarch, the remnants of which he also found in Rome and, above all, Constantinople. This strategy directed attention away from the military and religious conflicts of recent times towards an ancient past of mutual regard and cooperation. Chrysoloras' strategy prefigures strategies used by later Byzantine scholars in the Latin West, such as Demetrius Chalcondylas (see Chapter 2) and Michele Marullo (see Chapter 6), while Kalekas' idea that the Romans were actually Greeks would be worked out in much more detail by one of Chrysoloras' most successful successors in Florence, Ianus Lascaris (see Chapter 5), a century or so later.

Despite Chrysoloras' advocacy of Byzantine Greco-Romanness, it seems that most Byzantine intellectuals of the later fourteenth and early fifteenth century preferred to present themselves as either Romans or Hellenes, depending on context. Sometimes they used the names Ῥωμαῖοι and Ἕλληνες side by side without further comment. The Greco-Roman dualism that Chrysoloras and Isidore voice so self-consciously may explain the wavering of Demetrios Kydones and some of his contemporaries between the Roman and Hellenic

23 See here Pade (2007: I, 94–95), also on the dating of the letter either in 1396 or after 1397.

24 "Εἰ δέ τις καὶ ταῦτα ἀκριβῶς σκοποίη, οἶμαι καὶ ταῦτα εἶναι ὑπὲρ τοῦ Πλουτάρχου καίτοι παρ' ἐκείνου ἐστὶ δῆπου καλῶς ἰδεῖν, ὅποση κοινωνία πρὶν ἐν ἅπασιν ἦν τῷ τε τῶν Ἑλλήνων γένει καὶ τῷ τῶν Ἰταλῶν. τί γὰρ αὐτοῖς ἴδιον, ἀλλὰ μὴ κοινὸν ἦν, τῶν τε θείων ἀπλῶς καὶ ἀνθρωπίνων; καίτοι τί λέγω τῶν θείων καὶ τῶν ἀνθρωπίνων; οἳ γε μὴ μόνον τὰ ἀλλήλων σεμνά, λέγω γὰρ οὖν τὰ ἀλλήλων, ἀλλὰ καὶ τοὺς μύθους καὶ τὰς παιδίας ἡγάσθησαν, βουλόμενοι διὰ πάντων, εἰ δυνατὸν, συμφύναί" (Chrysoloras in Salutati, ed. Novati 1911: 341, ll. 17–22). Note that the Greek "μῦθοι" can mean 'words' (speech, language) but also more broadly 'stories', which are both valid meanings in this context. Elsewhere, Chrysoloras explained why some Romans preferred to write in Greek about the deceased in their families and cities (in Salutati, ed. Novati 1911: 341, ll. 22–31).

labels. Instead of uncertainty and instability, this wavering would then reflect their firm but implicit conviction of the Byzantines' double Greco-Roman background.²⁵ Before the intervention of Plethon, however, the allusive ways in which the Byzantine intelligentsia identified with the ancient Hellenes cannot be understood in terms of a coherent 'ethnic' theory.²⁶

The Hellenic Alternative in the Works of Gemistos Plethon

The first writer to theorise the connection between the Eastern Romans or Byzantines and the ancient Hellenes was the eccentric philosopher George Gemistos Plethon whose biography is obscure and riddled with contradictions and uncertainties.²⁷ In sharp contrast to Manuel Chrysoloras and Isidore of Kiev, who heralded a Greco-Roman compound identity, Plethon, for the first time, considered Greekness a full alternative to the traditional Romanness of the Byzantines and tried to change their self-perception. Plethon's views are important as they anticipate some salient features of the Hellenism of the Italo-Greek intelligentsia, albeit in a very different context. Plethon is also relevant as some members of the late-Byzantine intelligentsia studied with him, not only the famous Bessarion but also lesser known intellectuals such as Demetrios Rhaoul Kavakes, who later moved in Bessarion's circles in Rome.²⁸

Emperor Manuel II Palaeologus had sent Plethon to Mistra, the capital of the Despotate of the Morea on the Peloponnesus, where he acted as adviser to the emperor's brother Theodore II, who governed the Despotate, and created an intellectual and cultural climate that favoured the study of Hellenic literature, especially Plato, in a much less 'orthodox' fashion than was customary at Constantinople. It was Plethon who, at his school in Mistra, transformed the

25 Patrinelis (1972: 501–02, with n. 15). See also the observation of Patrinelis in Chrysoloras (ed. Patrinelis 2001: 51, n. 53).

26 Cf. Kaldellis (2014: 223).

27 The bibliography on Plethon is extensive. For his life and historical context, Woodhouse (1986) is still essential. For a concise overview of his life and works, see also Blum (2005a). Critical reviews of the recent scholarship, with extensive bibliographical references, are Siniosoglou (2011: 7–11) and Hladký (2014: 1–7). Hladký (2014: 325–29, 343) also offers a very helpful overview of both editions and translations of Plethon's work and of systematic bibliographies. Further references are in the footnotes to this chapter.

28 The most recent book-length studies of Plethon's thought are Siniosoglou (2011) and Hladký (2014). On Plethon's *Nachleben* in particular, see Benakis (2003), Bertozzi (2003), Blum (2005b), Dimitrakopoulos (2003), Lisi and Signes (1995: XLI–XLVIII), Skoutelas (1999: 45–48), and Woodhouse (1986: 357–79).

Hellenes from the object of intense but always watchful study into ancestors whose precepts were at the basis of a programme of social and political reform. While he did call the Byzantines ‘Romans’ on certain occasions, Plethon seems to dissociate himself from traditional Romanness.²⁹ Unlike the thirteenth-century ‘Hellenic Romans’, he did not write in direct response to rivalling claims of the Latin West to the Roman legacy of Byzantium. This he shared with Chrysoloras. Their Hellenism was not anti-Latin in this particular, thirteenth-century way, but their points of view were very different all the same. Unlike Chrysoloras, Plethon was uninterested in claiming a Roman heritage for the Byzantines and as indifferent to uncovering cultural common ground with the Latin West. He turned to the Hellenic tradition, and Plato in particular, primarily for the reinvigoration of Byzantium, which he saw threatened by economic, political, and ethical troubles as well as the territorial advance of the Ottoman Turks.³⁰

About the same time that Chrysoloras reconciled the Greek and Roman traditions in his view of the Byzantines, Plethon wrote three memoranda regarding the state of affairs in the Peloponnesus: a letter to Emperor Manuel II (known as *On the Isthmus*, ca. 1414), a speech to the despot of the Morea Theodore (the *Address to Theodore*, 1416–18), and a speech to the emperor (the *Address to Manuel*, 1418).³¹ When he wrote these treatises, the Morea was a semi-independent province of the Byzantine Empire, ruled by a relative of the emperor, usually his brother.³² In his memoranda, mainly inspired by Plato’s *Republic* and *Laws*, Plethon insisted on the need to revise the peninsula’s political organisation and emphasised the importance of good laws regulating public and private life. According to him, in order to survive the Ottomans, the Peloponnesus needed to be transformed into an economically and militarily self-sustaining polity, territorially circumscribed and ethnically homogeneous, socially divided into three separate classes with their own functions, and ruled by a monarch who was ideally counselled by a moderate number of well-educated advisers. To this effect, he formulated specific plans to reform, among

29 For example: “Ὅρῶμεν γὰρ οἱ ἡμῖν ἐκ τῆς μεγίστης Ῥωμαίων ἡγεμονίας κεχώρηκε τὰ πράγματα, οἷς ἀπάντων οἰχομένων δύο πόλεις μόνον ἐπὶ Θράκης περιλείπεται καὶ Πελοπόννησος, οὐδὲ ξύμπασα αὕτη γε, καὶ εἰ δὴ τι ἔτι νησίδιον σὼν ἐστί...” [We see how the mightiest Empire of the Romans turned out for us, for whom only two cities in Thrace [*Selymbria* and *Mesembria*] are left while all other cities have perished, and the Peloponnesus also remains (and not even in its entirety) as well as whatever little island is still safe...] (Plethon, ed. Lambros 1930: 129, ll. 13–17).

30 Cf. Siniosoglou (2011: 347–59).

31 On the disputed dates of the treatises, see Hladký (2014: 11), with references.

32 Classic studies on the cultural and political history of the Byzantine Morea are Runciman (1980, 2009), Löhnheysen (1977), and Zakythinos (1975).

other things, taxation, marriage, consumption, and punishment.³³ In the two *Addresses* in particular, however, Plethon also advanced an argument in support of the defence of the Peloponnesus that was, importantly, not only based on practical and strategic reasoning, but also on notions of historical ties and ethnic belonging.

The memoranda show that Plethon's political project was as much a structural socio-economic enterprise as it was an example of identity politics.³⁴ In the treatises, he presented the Hellenes as a coherent group or *genos* in the present, connected through language and tradition, and with a historical territory of their own. "We are Hellenes by race whom you lead and rule", he emphatically claimed in his speech for Emperor Manuel II, "as both our language and ancestral learning evince". Additionally, Plethon claimed a territorial and ethnic continuity for the Hellenes. He continued by saying that there was no country that was more appropriate for the Hellenes than the Peloponnesus, together with "the areas of Europe bordering upon it as well as the islands off its coast".³⁵ In this corner of Europe, according to him, the Hellenes had always lived without foreign intermingling, from time immemorial to his day.³⁶ In this

33 For an analysis of Plethon's political memoranda, see Masai (1956: 66–101). For a clear, concise discussion of his political philosophy, with references to the more recent literature see Hladký (2014: 11–19). The treatises were edited by Spyridon Lambros (1926a, 1930). An edition of the treatises with a German translation and notes is Elissen (1860). The most recent modern Greek translation of the memoranda is Baloglou (2002: 129–254). Passages are translated into English in Barker (1957: 198–219) and into Spanish in Signes Codoñer (1998: 82–90). On the various political aspects of Plethon's writings, see Capodiferro (2010: 55–83). On Plethon's political thought in particular, see especially Nikolaou (1974: 4–102) together with Blum (1987) and Peritore (1977). On the role of monasticism in Plethon's political treatises, see Konstantelos (2003). On the role of Sparta in Plethon's political thought, see Baloglou (2003: 319–26).

34 Cf. Hersant (1999: 128–30).

35 "Εσμέν γάρ οὖν ὧν ἡγεισθέ τε καὶ βασιλεύετε Ἕλληνες τὸ γένος, ὡς ἡ τε φωνὴ καὶ ἡ πάτριος παιδεία μαρτυρεῖ. Ἕλλησι δὲ οὐκ ἔστιν εὗρεῖν ἥτις ἄλλη οἰκειοτέρα χώρα οὐδὲν μᾶλλον προσήκουσα ἢ Πελοπόννησός τε καὶ ὅση δὴ αὐτῇ τῆς Εὐρώπης προσεχῆς τῶν τε αὐτῶν νήσων αἰ ἐπικείμεναι" (Plethon, ed. Lambros 1926a: 247, l. 14–248, l. 3). For an English paraphrase of the letter, see Woodhouse (1986: 102–06, with discussion on pp. 106–18).

36 "Ταύτην γάρ δὴ φαίνονται τὴν χώραν Ἕλληνες αἰεὶ οἰκοῦντες οἱ αὐτοὶ ἐξ ὅτου περ ἄνθρωποι διαμνημονεύουσιν οὐδένων ἄλλων προενοκηκότων οὐδὲ ἐπῆλυδες κατασχόντες, ὥσπερ ἄλλοι συχνοὶ ἐξ ἐτέρας μὲν ὠρμημένοι, ἐτέραν δὲ οἰκοῦσι κατασχόντες ἄλλους τε ἐκβαλόντες καὶ αὐτοὶ ὑφ' ἐτέρων τὸ αὐτὸ ἔστιν ὅτε πεπονθότες, ἀλλ' Ἕλληνες τήνδε τὴν χώραν τούναντίον αὐτοὶ τε αἰεὶ φαίνονται κατέχοντες καὶ ἀπὸ ταύτης ὀρμώμενοι, περισυσία οἰκητόρων ἐτέρας τε οὐκ ὀλίγας κατασχόντες, οὕτε ταύτην ἐκλιπόντες" [*It is manifest that the Hellenes have always inhabited this area from time immemorial (no other people had inhabited the area before them) and*

way, he not only claimed a shared origin for the Hellenes, but even suggested ethnic stability over centuries.³⁷ He also claimed that the Peloponnesus had produced Hellenic stock (“τὰ τῶν Ἑλλήνων γένη”) and that it was from there that they had undertaken their most famous deeds.³⁸ It is notable that Plethon used the emphatic plural “τὰ γένη” in his formulation instead of the singular “τὸ γένος” that his student Bessarion would later use to refer to the Hellenes in his memorandum to the despot Constantine Palaeologus (discussed in Chapter 3). Although it is unclear exactly which individual “γένη” Plethon had in mind, it is clear that he connected them all to the Peloponnesus, which made the peninsula the heartland of the Hellenes. This shows that for Plethon, the Hellenes were not only a cultural group, but also an ethnic one that moreover radiated from a specific home territory to which they were naturally attached. I will come back to this feature of Plethon’s vision of the Greek community in my discussion of Bessarion’s Hellenism in Chapter 3.

Plethon’s famous phrase “we are Hellenes whom you rule” has often been taken to mean that in his view, Manuel II did not rule over Romans at all.³⁹ In the immediate context of the phrase, however, Plethon himself emphasised that he spoke about the Peloponnesus (“ὑπὲρ αὐτῆς τῆς χώρας”) and its inhabitants,

that foreigners did not occupy it, as many others (after having been expelled from one area) occupy and inhabit another region after throwing out other people and sometimes experiencing the same themselves by the hand of others. But it is manifest that the Hellenes, on the other hand, have always inhabited this area and sailed out from there due to the great number of colonists, dwelling in not a few places, without however leaving this region] (Plethon, ed. Lambros 1926a: 248, ll. 2–10).

37 Although Plethon never mentions autochthony literally, he comes close to transferring the ancient claim of autochthony from the ancient Athenians to the Peloponnesians. On the ancient Athenian concept, see Rosivach (1987).

38 “Συμπάσης δὲ ταύτης τῆς χώρας αὐτῇ Πελοπόννησος ὁμολογεῖται τὰ πρῶτά τε καὶ γνωριμώτατα ἐνεγκοῦσα τῶν Ἑλλήνων γένη, καὶ ἀπὸ ταύτης ὁρμώμενοι τὰ μέγιστα τε καὶ ἐνδοξότατα Ἑλληνες ἔργα ἀπεδείξαντο. . .” [*It is commonly agreed that of this entire territory the Peloponnesus brought forth the first and most distinguished races of the Hellenes, and setting out from this region the Hellenes showed their greatest and most famous deeds. . .*] (Plethon, ed. Lambros 1926a: 248, ll. 10–13). The word “πρῶτά” is ambiguous and might mean both ‘the most prominent’ and ‘the first’. The idea that the Peloponnesus was the heartland of the Hellenes was also expressed by Plethon’s contemporary Manuel Kalekas. In a letter to Manuel Chrysoloras, Kalekas (ed. Loenertz 1950: 307, ll. 23–24) explicitly called the Peloponnesus the “ancient fatherland of the Hellenes” (“τὴν ἀρχαίαν τῶν Ἑλλήνων πατρίδα”). For similar views of Demetrios Kydones, see Kourniakos (2013: 461).

39 See here, among others, Harris (2006: 93), Page (2008: 244–55), Rapp (2008: 142–43), and Vryonis (1991: 8, 13; 1999: 35). Bargeliotis (1973) in particular emphasised the way in which Plethon, according to him, anticipated Neohellenic consciousness.

but not about the Empire in its entirety.⁴⁰ In other contexts, therefore, we find Plethon, perhaps somewhat obligatorily, referring to the Byzantines as Romans instead of Hellenes.⁴¹ Plethon's innovation was not in the fact that he styled the Peloponnesians 'Hellenes' but that he offered an ethnographical background theory to account for the Greekness of the Byzantine Romans.⁴² In his treatise to Emperor Manuel II, shifting attention away from practical considerations towards loyalties of belonging, Plethon articulated a rationale to account for the Greekness of the Byzantines. Apart from claiming that Constantinople originally was a Dorian colony, he also maintained that the Romans who had settled in Byzantium under Emperor Constantine were at least partly Greek. In order to substantiate this claim, he argued that Rome's population had consisted of Sabines, who were Spartans just like the Dorians.⁴³ In this way, the philosopher stressed the close historical and ethnic relationship, or "οἰκειότης" (intimacy, in his own words), between the Byzantine Romans

40 At the beginning of the paragraph, Plethon (ed. Lambros 1926a: 247, ll. 10–13) states: "Πρῶτον μὲν δὴ ὑπὲρ αὐτῆς τῆς χώρας, ὡς περὶ πλείστου ποιητέα ὑμῖν ἐστί, βραχέ' ἅττα μοι εἰρήσεται, οὐχ ὅτι μὴ καὶ αὐτοὺς ὑμᾶς περὶ τὴν ταύτης ἐπιμέλειαν ἐσπουδαχότας ὄρω, ἀλλ' αὐτοῦ γέ τοι τοῦ λόγου ἔνεκα ὡς διὰ τῶν δεόντων δὴ χωροῖη" [*First of all I will state briefly about this area that it must be much valued by you, not because I see that you have not been seriously concerned about giving proper attention to it, but for the sake of the argument so that it will advance through the necessary stages*]. Compare his statement at p. 249, ll. 5–7. In the same vein, Beck (1960: 90–92) argued that Plethon's Hellenism was not an attack on the Roman polity ruled from Constantinople, but an attempt to direct the emperor's attention towards the Peloponnesus.

41 In his *Monodia in Helenam Palaeologinam*, for example, Plethon (ed. Lambros 1926b: 271) referred to the fact that the emperor reigned over the race of the Romans: "Ἡ τῶν ἡμετέρων βασιλέων τε καὶ ἡγεμόνων αὕτη μήτηρ τῶ τούτων πατρί ἐγγήματο (...) οὐκ ὀλίγων τοιοῦτων βασιλέων ἀπογόνῳ βασιλεύοντί τε τοῦ ἡμετέρου τούτου τῶν Ῥωμαίων γένους..." [*The mother of our kings and despots married their father (...) the offspring of not a few of such kings who reigned our race of the Romans*].

42 Cf. Kaldellis (2014: 223–24).

43 Elissen (1860: 135, n. 5) mentions Dionysius of Halicarnassus as Plethon's source for the idea that the Sabines were Spartans (cf. Barker 1957: 199, n. 3). Dionysius (*Ant. Rom.* 2.49.4–5) mentions the theory that a colony of Lacedaemonians settled among the Sabines at the time of Lycurgus, but does not argue that the Sabines derived their origin from the Spartans. The Sabines were widely believed to share Spartan customs due to the influence of Spartan colonists (see, apart from the passage in Dionysius, Plut. *Rom.* 16.1, *Num.* 1.3; Sil. *Pun.* 2.8, 8.412; Just. *Epit.* 20.1.13; Zonar. 7.3). The idea that the Sabines derived from the Spartan Sabus was reportedly held by the Roman historian Gn. Gellius (Serv. *Aen.* 8.638 = Peter, *HRRel.* fr. 10).

and the ancient Greeks.⁴⁴ In this key passage he rationalised the Byzantines' relationship with the Hellenes in a decidedly ethnic sense:

For those who give it a thought, it may well be possible to understand that this land [the Peloponnesus] is the mother and the origin of that big city at the Bosphorus which is now the seat of your Empire; first, because of the fact that the original inhabitants of Byzantion were Hellenes and Dorians (and the Dorians are obviously Peloponnesians); and secondly, because of the fact that those who thereafter set sail from Rome in Italy to this illustrious settlement, and thus made a splendid and great addition to Byzantion, were in no way foreigners to the Peloponnesians, since the Sabines were joined as settlers, on terms of equality and parity, with the Aenianes,⁴⁵ when they founded Rome, the happiest of cities, and the Sabines came from the Peloponnesus and were Lacedaemonians.⁴⁶

The Hellenes could boast to have established two Romes, while the so-called Romans could pride themselves on a distinguished Hellenic pedigree.⁴⁷ Plethon emphasised the relevance of ancient Greece, and particularly the Peloponnesus, for the pre-Roman history of the imperial capital as well as for the later periods of its Roman past. While for Chrysoloras Rome remained the

44 Plethon (ed. Lambros 1926a: 249, l. 19).

45 Lambros' text reads "Αἰνιάσι" (see the next note), while Elissen gives "Αἰνείασι" (Plethon, ed. Elissen 1860: 43, ll. 9–10). Both Barker (1957: 199) and Elissen (1860: 89) understood the Aenianes as referring to the descendants of Aeneas. The *Suda Lexicon* records "Αἰνείεις" and "Αἰνείανες" as two different words to refer to the same small tribe from upper Greece and warns that the "Αἰνείεις" and "Αἰνείανες" must not be confounded with the "Αἰνείαδεις", or the descendants of Aeneas (see *Suda* s.v. "Αἰνείαδης"; cf. Steph. Byz. s.v. "Αἰνία"). As there seems to be no connection between Rome, the Sabines, and the Aenianes of upper Greece, we might perhaps emend Αἰνείαδεις. The emendation would be consistent with what Plethon (ed. Lambros 1930: 115, l. 23–116, l. 1) claims elsewhere, namely that the Trojans under Aeneas settled in Italy and later founded Rome together with the Sabines of Lacedaemonian origin.

46 "Καὶ μὲν δὴ καὶ τῆς μεγάλης ταυτησὶ πόλεως τῆς πρὸς Βοσπόρῳ, ἥπερ νῦν ὑμῖν βασιλείον ἐστι, τήνδε τὴν χώραν εἴη ἂν λογιζομένοις οἷον μητέρα τε οὖσαν καὶ ἀφορμὴν τινα ἰδεῖν, τοῦτο μὲν ἐπειδὴ Βυζάντιον οἱ προενοηκότες Ἕλληνες τε καὶ Δωριεῖς, Δωριεῖς δὲ Πελοποννήσιοι περιφανῶς, τοῦτο δ' ἐπειδὴ καὶ οἱ μετὰ ταῦτα, τὴν λαμπρὰν ταύτην ἀπὸ τῆς ἐν Ἰταλίᾳ Ῥώμης ἀποικίαν στείλαμενοι καὶ Βυζάντιον οὕτω καλῇ καὶ μεγάλῃ ἐπηυξηκότες τῇ προσθήκῃ, Πελοποννησίων οὐκ ἄλλότριοι, εἴ γε Αἰνιάσι μὲν Σαβῖνοι ἐπὶ τοῖς ἴσοις καὶ ὁμοίοις συνωκισμένοι Ῥώμην εὐτυχιστάτην πόλεωι κατώκισαν, Σαβῖνοι δὲ ἐκ Πελοποννήσου τε καὶ Λακεδαιμονίῳ" (Plethon, ed. Lambros 1926a: 248, l. 13–249, l. 5).

47 Cf. Beck (1960: 91).

main point of reference, for Plethon the Peloponnesus was the centre of revival. In this way, he created a political myth to unify various strata of Byzantine society, forming an alternative to the ‘Roman’ order of the Eastern Roman Empire.⁴⁸

Plethon’s calling the Byzantines Hellenes seems to have found at least some resonance. For example, John Argyropoulos addressed the Eastern Roman emperor in a series of speeches as the philosopher-king of the Hellenes, calling him the “Sun King of Hellas” and a “common delight for the Hellenes” (this was in ca. 1448).⁴⁹ After the emperor’s death, Argyropoulos lamented the dangers that befell the Hellenes and stressed what the emperor had done for the Hellenic people to promote their liberty, regarding it as an imperial duty to safeguard “the lands, the cities, the language of the Hellenes, and the entire tradition and law of our forefathers”.⁵⁰ When the despot returned to Constantinople to claim the imperial crown a year after his brother’s death, Argyropoulos again addressed the Byzantines gathered in the capital of the Eastern Roman Empire as Hellenes.⁵¹ Both in his speeches to Constantine XI and in his monody for the emperor’s brother, he consistently referred to the subjects of the emperor as ‘Hellenes’ instead of Romans, but, unlike Plethon, did so without explaining their relationship to the ancient Hellenes.

In more conservative circles, Plethon’s Greekness was regarded with suspicion. One of Plethon’s principal critics, Scholarios, famously admitted that he was a Hellene by virtue of his language (“τῇ φωνῇ”), but he rejected the idea of being personally Hellenic because he did not think as the Hellenes had done and wanted to be called a Christian (“χριστιανός”) after his true

48 Peritore (1977: 190).

49 “ὦ τῆς Ἑλλάδος ἡλίου βασιλεῦ, κοινὸν τοῖς Ἑλλήσιν ὀφθαλμόν” (Argyropoulos, ed. Lambros 1910: 7, ll. 4–8). For most of Argyropoulos’ Greek works, see Lambros (1910a). For his biography, see esp. Cammelli (1941b) and Geanakoplos (1974b). Accessible introductions to his life and works are the entries of Emilio Bigi in *DBI* s.v. “Argiropulo, Giovanni” (with bibliography up to 1960, but add S.G. Mercati 1921 and Garin 1950) and Jonathan Harris in *EGHT* s.v. “Argyropoulos, John” (with concise bibliography up to 2000, but add Monfasani 1993 and Mondrain 2000). See also Cariello (2011). For an assessment of Argyropoulos’ contribution to Greek studies in Renaissance Italy, see N.G. Wilson (2000: 112–17).

50 “γένος ἅπαν Ἑλλήνων”, “ἡ τῶν Ἑλλήνων ἐλευθερία” (Argyropoulos ed. Lambros 1910: 4, ll. 2–3; 5, ll. 3–9). Argyropoulos (ed. Lambros 1910: 6, ll. 16–20) emphasises that, due to the emperor’s politics, the “common hearth of our people” and “the lands, the cities, the language of the Hellenes, and the entire tradition and law of our forefathers” were saved (“ἐσώζετο μὲν ἡ κοινὴ τοῦ γένους ἐστία, ἐσώζοντο δὲ καὶ ὅσαι νῦν ὑφ’ αὐτῆν καὶ χώραι καὶ πόλεις καὶ ἡ τῶν Ἑλλήνων φωνὴ καὶ ἅπαν ἔθος καὶ νόμος πάτριος”).

51 Argyropoulos (ed. Lambros 1910: 10, ll. 6–11). In his *Basilica*, too, Argyropoulos (ed. Lambros 1910: 37, ll. 13–14) addressed his audience in this manner.

belief.⁵² Plethon's enthusiasm for ancient Greek philosophy in particular was sometimes regarded as heresy or even paganism. Some of his students were believed to endorse heretical and pagan ideas, and many of the philosophical ideas Plethon expressed in his works (for example, determinism and the pre-existence of the soul) could hardly be regarded as compatible with Christian doctrine.⁵³ Although his "Platonism in practice" of the memoranda was adventurous and audacious in the Byzantine context, his most controversial work was the *Book of Laws*: after Plethon's death, Scholarios burnt most of it for its 'dangerously Hellenic' content. In this work, Plethon designed a theology that, as he himself explained, was a combination of Hellenic pantheism, Zoroastrianism and Platonism, a Platonic and Stoic ethics, and a less rigorous form of Spartan political organisation.⁵⁴ Additionally, he composed prayers in honour of the ancient gods and gave precise instructions on the celebration of the liturgy.⁵⁵

The purpose of this work is a matter of unresolved debate. According to some modern scholars, the *Book of Laws* presents the outline of radical socio-political reforms that Plethon deemed necessary since he saw his memoranda had failed to produce the desired effect.⁵⁶ Others, on the other hand, emphasised the Orthodox elements in Plethon's work or argued that his

52 "Καὶ αὖθις, "Ελλην ὦν τῇ φωνῇ, οὐκ ἂν ποτε φαίην "Ελλην εἶναι, διὰ τὸ μὴ φρονεῖν ὡς ἐφρόνουν ποτὲ "Ελληνες· ἀλλ' ἀπὸ τῆς ἰδίας μάλιστα θέλω ὀνομάζεσθαι δόξης. Καὶ εἴ τις ἔροιτό με τίς εἰμί, ἀποκρινοῦμαι χριστιανὸς εἶναι" [*Although I am a Hellene by virtue of my language, I would always deny that I am a Hellene because of the fact that I do not think like the Hellenes. I want to be named after my own belief. And if someone would ask me who I am, I will answer that I am a Christian*] (Scholarios, ed. Jugie et al. 1930: 253, ll. 4–6). See on Scholarios' views on Hellenism, Romanness and Greekness, Livanos (2006, 2003), Angelou (1996), and Vryonis (1991: 9–13).

53 Hankins (1990: I, 198).

54 Woodhouse (1986: 322). English summaries of the parts of the surviving text are available in Woodhouse (1986: 325–56). Judging from the Preface, the work discussed theology, ethics, poetics, ceremonies, natural science, logic, Hellenic antiquities, and matters of health. A German translation of part of the text is in Blum and Seitter (2005: 7–23); a modern Greek translation is by Chatzimichail (2005); a Spanish translation by Lisi and Signes (1995); a French translation by A. Pellissier is in Plethon (ed. Alexandre 1966). Although Plethon took his inspiration mainly from Plato, he was not a Neo-Platonist in any simple way: he did not hesitate to alter Plato's text by censoring and even rewriting entire passages to bring the ancient philosopher's views into harmony with his own philosophical system (Pagani 2009). In one of his courses on Homer's *Iliad*, he similarly 'corrected' Homeric theology in light of his own theological views (Tambrun-Krasker 2013: 21).

55 Woodhouse (1986: 345, 351–53).

56 Siniosoglou (2011: 350–51).

religious rules must be taken no more seriously than the philosophical religion of Thomas More's *Utopia* or should be read, in Neoplatonic fashion, allegorically.⁵⁷ Additionally, it has been pointed out that the suspicions of paganism were prejudiced in one way or the other and must therefore be treated with caution.⁵⁸ In any case, it is difficult to find anyone among Plethon's identifiable pupils and friends who was influenced by his alleged paganism in any demonstrable way.⁵⁹ Most recently, Vojtěch Hladký advanced the argument that, unlike the memoranda, the *Book of Laws* was *not* a piece of political philosophy intended for public usage but a personal document in which the author sought to understand ancient religion and to harmonise it with his own philosophical reasoning, rather than to revive the ancient pantheon.⁶⁰ Despite the divergent viewpoints about the purpose of the *Book of Laws* and Plethon's true beliefs, most modern scholars would agree that the philosopher used Hellenic philosophy, and in particular Platonism, as a source to criticise and reform the (in his view) narrow-minded doctrinal authority of the Church, as well as the ecclesiastical hierarchy of his day.⁶¹ Just as in his identification with the ancient Hellenes, in his philosophy, too, Plethon explored the limits of how far one could go with the Hellenic tradition in Byzantium.

The direct influence of Plethon's Hellenism on individual Byzantine scholars is often very difficult to discern.⁶² Even if we assume that Plethon advocated a form of neo-paganism, Italian humanists were largely unresponsive to it, and there is no reason to believe that this was different for the self-declared Hellenes of Byzantium.⁶³ The most Plethonian thinker among them was Demetrios Raoul Kavakes, who not only salvaged the remnants of Plethon's work but also declared that he had remained faithful to his philosophy, stating, in Rome at the age of 74, that he had been a worshipper of the Sun from his

57 For a good summary of the debate over Plethon's paganism and a nuanced position-taking, see Hankins (1990: I, 197–205). See also Signes Codoñer (1998: 27–38), pointing out the Orthodox elements in Plethon's thought.

58 Hankins (1990: I, 198). For a discussion of inimical attitudes towards Plethon among contemporaries, see Hladký (2014: 220–32).

59 See the systematic discussion in Hladký (2014: 204–220).

60 Hladký (2014: 189–285).

61 Hankins (1990: I, 203–05).

62 On the influence of Plethon's views on Bessarion, see mainly Pertusi (1968), Tambrun-Krasker (2013: 22–28), and Hladký (2014: 207–15). On Plethon and Michael Apostoles, see in particular Stefec (2010a: 135–38) and Hladký (2014: 219–20). On the relation between Plethon and Chalkokondyles, see below, n. 67.

63 Monfasani (1992: 52–61), Hladký (2014: 205–220).

early adolescence.⁶⁴ In his self-declared adherence to Plethon's ideas, Kavakes seems to have been the exception rather than the rule. And even then, his own heliolatric ideas were rather idiosyncratic (for example, in Plethon's theology, the Sun was only of the third intra-celestial order, Zeus being supreme in power).⁶⁵ There is, moreover, no evidence that Kavakes' own son, the Neo-Latin poet Manilio Cabacio Rallo, shared his father's neo-pagan, allegedly Plethonian worldview: he served in the household of many prominent Romans including two popes, and eventually became bishop of Monemvasia under Pope Leo x.⁶⁶ This seems to be the rule rather than the exception. The only text by a Greek expatriate sometimes associated with Plethon's alleged paganism are the *Hymni naturales* by Cabacio Rallo's more famous comrade Michele Tarcaniota Marullo, but the similarities between Marullo's hymns and Plethon's *Book of Laws* are superficial and their contexts of production very different (see Chapter 6, p. 219).

Probably closest to Plethon's worldview was one of his few students who did not settle in the Latin West and remained in the Greek East after 1453. Laonikos Chalkokondyles accepted Plethon's idea that the Byzantines were Hellenes and rejected the Roman identifier completely. During the later 1450s and early 1460s, he worked out a secular view on the Hellenes in a full-blown historical narrative. His work shows that, outside the context of the Italian diaspora, the Hellenic alternative was carried further after Plethon, even though it was not the sole or even the most likely option for self-presentation in the Eastern Mediterranean, where most Greek-speakers seem to have identified with the (post-)Byzantine culture of Romania as Romans or with the culture of the Orthodox Church and monasticism.⁶⁷

64 Bidez (1929: 78).

65 Cf. Monfasani (1992: 57–58): “Kavakes’ worship of the sun is destructive of Pletho’s polytheistic scheme, where the sun has an important, but nonetheless quite circumscribed place. Kavakes’ heliolatry and Pletho’s brand of polytheism are mutually exclusive”. On Kavakes and Plethon, see Hladký (2014: 217–19).

66 See here Lamers (2013a: 130–37). For some reason, Woodhouse (1986: 375) assumed that Manilio Rallo was “inclined to pagan doctrines” and his “outlook on life had much in common with [Plethon’s]”.

67 Kaldellis (2014: 15–16). On the relation between Plethon and Chalkokondyles, see Hladký (2014: 215–217). On the influence of Plethon’s idea of fate on Laonikos Chalkokondyles’ views, see Harris (2003b) and Kaldellis (2014: 209–29), with further references. On Chalkokondyles’ intellectual circle in Mistra more generally, see also Akışık (2013: 31–99).

Plethonian Greekness in the *Histories* of Laonikos Chalkokondyles

Laonikos Chalkokondyles was born as Nikolaos in Athens (then ruled by the Florentine Acciaiuoli family), but fled with his family to Mistra after a coup by his father George had failed.⁶⁸ In Mistra, the family went into the service of the despot of the Morea, Constantine Palaeologus (who would become the last emperor of the Romans). Laonikos lived in close association with the despot and studied under Plethon. Although he wrote most of his history after the siege and fall of Constantinople, there is no evidence that he ever settled in Italy as his relative Demetrius Chalcondylas did, accepting the first chair of Greek in Padua around the time Laonikos was finishing the *Histories*. He most probably wrote his history during the 1450s and 1460s in an Eastern context, perhaps Constantinople.⁶⁹ Written in the style of Thucydides but with the ethnographic templates of Herodotus in mind, Chalkokondyles' book tells the story of the emergence of the Ottoman Turks and the decline of the Byzantines, emphasising the period from the fifteenth century until 1464.⁷⁰ Unlike the (near-contemporary) histories of Doukas and Kritovoulos, Chalkokondyles' history was known in the Latin West. It was read, for instance, by Ianus Lascaris, who added marginal notes to his copy.⁷¹

Any reader who comes to the *Histories* expecting to find humanist-Christian crusade rhetoric, as we find, for example, in the work of his relative Demetrius Chalcondylas (see Chapter 3, pp. 118–19 and Chapter 5, pp. 171–72), will be disappointed: Laonikos is not preoccupied with presenting the Ottoman Turks as monstrous barbarians and does not even show outspoken hostility towards

68 An up-to-date and critical overview of Chalkokondyles' life and circumstances is Kaldellis (2014: 2–22) with extensive bibliography on pp. 269–88. Akışık (2013: 4–21) also offers an overview of what we know about his life (see pp. 23–25 for an overview of the literature concerning Laonikos). The text cited here is that of Jenő Darkó (1922–23). As this edition is very rare, I also included references to the Greek text printed with the translation of Anthony Kaldellis (2014), who here and there also restored the readings of the manuscripts. The translations below largely follow Kaldellis' translation.

69 On the place of composition see, Kaldellis (2014: 12–15, 20–22). On the date, see Kaldellis (2014: 18). On the intended audience, see Kaldellis (2014: 197–205).

70 A brief overview of the period covered by the *Histories* is by Kaldellis (2014: 26). For Chalkokondyles' use of Thucydides and Herodotus as sources of inspiration, see Kaldellis (2014: 30–48, 63–78).

71 It concerns BNP, Cod. Gr. 1781. For the presence of the codex in Lascaris' book collection, see Jackson (2003a: 114). In the sixteenth century, Chalkokondyles' work was translated in Latin by Clauser (1556) and partly in Tuscan, possibly by Donato di Ruberto Acciaiuoli (BA, Cod. 2247, but see also BE, Fondo Campori, Cod. 300).

Islam, since he is generally not interested in the religious issues haunting most of his contemporaries. In view of this general absence of religious commitment, it may be tempting to see Chalkokondyles as a ‘pagan’ like Demetrios Raoul Kavakes, but in reality his religious views are very difficult to know. In any case, we must not look at him as a typically Christian author, but as a highly idiosyncratic historian, perhaps inclined towards philosophical paganism but working in a Christian society.⁷² Despite the similarities between Plethon and Laonikos, the contexts in which they worked were very different. Plethon had hoped to transform the Despotate of the Peloponnesus into a Hellenic state based on Platonic principles. But when Laonikos wrote his history in the late 1450s and early 1460s, Byzantium’s decline had already proven irreversible. Turning to the past, he set out to explain how the fall of Byzantium could have happened without, however, exculpating the Byzantines.⁷³

Chalkokondyles was the first Byzantine author who not only called the Romans of the East Hellenes, but also cast them in a more or less coherent narrative of Hellenic instead of Roman history, explaining *why* the Romans of the East were *really* Hellenes. In so doing, he introduced into Greek historiography Plethon’s alternative to traditional Byzantine Romanness and to Greco-Roman compromises such as the one proposed by Chrysoloras. He thus hinted at a project of Greek rebirth that was simultaneously taking shape in the different context of the Italian diaspora (see pp. 51–62 below and Chapter 2, pp. 79–86). Much in the manner of Herodotus, Chalkokondyles paid much attention to other peoples beyond the immediate neighbours of the Byzantine Empire.⁷⁴ Among these peoples, he used the Roman label (Ῥωμαῖοι) to refer to the pope’s flock and the subjects of the Roman emperor.⁷⁵

While Chalkokondyles was not as explicit about the defining features of the Hellenes as was another of Plethon’s students, Cardinal Bessarion (see Chapter 3), it seems that lineage, language, and shared culture were the basic ingredients. When he discussed the Empire of Trebizond, for example, he claimed that the Trapezuntines were “Hellenes by race, and their customs

72 Cf. Kaldellis (2014: 102). On Chalkokondyles’ approach to religion as well as Islam and the Ottoman Turks, see Kaldellis (2014: 102–70). For his notion of the barbarian in relation to the Ottoman Turks, see in particular also Akışık (2013: 100–80).

73 Kaldellis (2014: 172) emphasises that Laonikos criticised the Byzantines repeatedly for their alleged “virtue-deficit”. For his Hellenocriticism, see Kaldellis (2014: 188–205).

74 This sets him apart from other Byzantine historians. Even if they imitated Herodotus in points of idiom and style, they did generally not share his curiosity about other peoples (Wifstrand 1972: 7).

75 See here Kaldellis (2014: 177–88). On Laonikos’ view of the Romans and the Roman heritage of Byzantium, see also Akışık (2013: 238–300).

and language are equally Hellenic”.⁷⁶ His conception of the Hellenic community moreover transcended political borders—a feature of Bessarion’s idea of Greekness, too. After his account of the fall of Trebizond in 1461, he concluded that “in a small amount of time all the Greeks and the rulers of the Greeks had been overturned by this sultan [Mehmet II], starting with the city of Byzantion, after that the Peloponnesus, and finally the king and land of Trebizond”.⁷⁷ In this way, he subsumed the peoples and rulers of Constantinople, the Morea, and Trebizond under the Hellenic category as they shared an ancient lineage, customs, and language. Apart from creating an comprehensive ethno-cultural notion of the Greek world, however, Chalkokondyles went a step further, as he wanted to see all Hellenes united under one Hellenic king. He explained his choice to write in Greek: he believed that Greek would regain its position as a world language

as soon as a king who is Greek himself, along with the kings that follow upon him, constitutes a not inconsiderable kingdom and gathers into it the children of the Greeks. They will govern themselves according to their own customs, in a manner most pleasing to themselves and from a position of strength with regard to other people.⁷⁸

76 “...Ἑλληνάς τε ὄντας τὸ γένος, καὶ τὰ ἥθη τε ἅμα καὶ τὴν φωνὴν προῖεμένους Ἑλληνικὴν” (Chalkokondyles, ed. Darkó 1923: 219, ll. 4–5 = ed. Kaldellis 2014: II, 304). Compare the next note.

77 “Τραπεζοὺς μὲν οὖν οὕτως ἐάλω, καὶ ἡ τῆς Κόλχων χώρα σύμπασα ὑπὸ βασιλεῖ ἐγένετο, ἡγεμονία καὶ αὕτη Ἑλλήνων οὖσα καὶ ἐς τὰ ἥθη τε καὶ δίκαιταν τετραμμένη Ἑλλήνων, ὥστε ἀναστάτους γενέσθαι ὑπὸ τοῦδε τοῦ βασιλέως οὐ πολλῷ χρόνῳ τοὺς Ἑλληνάς τε καὶ Ἑλλήνων ἡγεμόνας, πρῶτα μὲν τὴν Βυζαντίου πόλιν, μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα Πελοπόννησόν τε καὶ Τραπεζοῦντος βασιλεία καὶ χώραν αὐτήν” [*That was how Trebizond fell and how the entire land of Kolchis came under the king’s authority. This too had been a principality of the Hellenes and its customs and lifestyle were also Greek, so that in a short amount of time the Hellenes and the rulers of the Hellenes had been overturned by this king [Mehmet II], starting with the city of Byzantion, after that the Peloponnesus, and finally the king and land of Trebizond*] (Chalkokondyles, ed. Darkó 1923: 248, ll. 17–23 = ed. Kaldellis 2014: I, 362).

78 “Μὴ δὲ ἐκεῖνὸ γε πάνυ ἐκφαύλως ἔχον ἡμῖν, ὥς Ἑλληνικῇ φωνῇ ταῦτα διέξιμεν, ἐπεὶ ἡ γε τῶν Ἑλλήνων φωνὴ πολλὰ καὶ ἀνὰ τὴν οἰκουμένην διέσπαρται καὶ συγχაίς ἐγκαταμείμικται. Καὶ κλέος μὲν αὕτῃ μέγα τὸ παραυτίκα, μείζον δὲ καὶ ἐς αὐθις, ὁπότε δὴ ἀνὰ βασιλείαν οὐ φαύλην Ἑλλήνων τε αὐτὸς βασιλεὺς καὶ ἐξ αὐτοῦ ἐσόμενοι βασιλεῖς, οἳ δὴ καὶ οἱ τῶν Ἑλλήνων παῖδες ξυλλεγόμενοι κατὰ τὰ σφῶν αὐτῶν ἔθιμα ὥς ἡδιστα μὲν σφίσιν αὐτοῖς, τοῖς δὲ ἄλλοις ὥς κράτιστα πολιτεύουσιν” [*Let no one deride us for relating these matters in Greek, for the language of the Hellenes has spread to many places throughout the world and has mixed with many other languages. It is very prestigious already and will be even more so in the future, when a king who is himself a Hellene, along with the kings that follow after him, will rule a substantial kingdom. There the*

In terms of his representation of Byzantium, Chalkokondyles' most important historiographical innovation was the fact that he gave Byzantium a Hellenic rather than a Roman past, a strategy also used by his teacher Plethon. At the beginning of his work, he observed that "many others have, at various times, made records and written the history of each of the deeds of the Hellenes as they happened", thus framing what he had to say about the decline of the Byzantine Empire as part of Greek history and Greek historiography. The first pages of his work particularly read as a summary of his view on the Greek past of the Eastern Roman Empire.⁷⁹ In this summary, 'Byzantine history' pre-dates the founding of Constantinople by Constantine the Great, which had been a traditional starting point for Byzantine historiography. With considerable leaps through time, Chalkokondyles recounted the Greek colonisation of Asia and Africa, the expansion of the Greeks towards India and the Caucasus, the affairs of the Spartans and the Athenians, and the king of the Macedonians and his successors.⁸⁰ After briefly mentioning the achievements of Alexander the Great, he immediately turned to the rising power of the Romans. In his account of how the Greek city of Byzantion became the Roman capital under Constantine the Great, he again made a significant leap in time, from Alexander the Great and his successors (roughly the period between 336 and 30 BC) to the time of Pope Sylvester I (who was in office between 314 and 335) and Constantine the Great (who reigned from 306 until 337) and so skipped the history of the Hellenistic age. His summary of Greek history exemplifies what has been called 'mnemonic pasting': it suggests contiguity with the ancient Greek past by sequencing events to form a continuous flow of history from the past right into the writer's present.

In order to emphasise the Greekness of Constantinople, Chalkokondyles refrained from using the Roman names for the new capital and employed the name of the ancient Greek colony: 'Byzantion' instead of 'Constantinople' or 'New Rome'. He thus removed the Byzantine capital from Roman history and placed it firmly within the Hellenic tradition. In his conception, Byzantion was the place where Hellenes and Romans had mixed, from the time of the Roman influx in the fourth century under Constantine the Great onwards:

sons of the Hellenes may finally be gathered and govern themselves according to their own customs, in a manner that is most favourable for themselves and from a position of strength with regard to other peoples] (Chalkokondyles, ed. Darkó 1922: 2, ll. 12–19; cf. ed. Kaldellis 2014: 1, 2–4). I adopted Kaldellis' insertion of "τὰ" before "σφῶν αὐτῶν ἔθιμα".

79 Chalkokondyles (ed. Darkó 1922: 1–8 = ed. Kaldellis 2014: 1, 2–14).

80 Chalkokondyles (ed. Darkó 1922: 2, l. 20–3, l. 8 = ed. Kaldellis 2014: 1, 2–4).

At that point the Romans attained the greatest realm in the world, because their virtue was in proportion to their fortune. They entrusted Rome to the highest of their priests and crossed over into Thrace under the command of their king. In the land of Thrace, which is the closest to Asia, they made the Hellenic city of Byzantion their capital for carrying on the struggle against the Persians, at whose hands they had suffered such terrible things. From this point on, the Hellenes mixed with Romans in this place, and because many more Hellenes ruled there than Romans, their language and customs ultimately prevailed. However, they did change their name and no longer called themselves by their hereditary one. They saw fit to call the kings of Byzantion by a title that dignified them, “Emperors of the Romans”, but never again “Kings of the Hellenes”.⁸¹

Insisting on the cultural predominance of the Hellenes, Chalkokondyles maintained that Greek dominance in Byzantion explained the fact that the Hellenes had preserved their language and preserved and cherished their customs (“γλώτταν μὲν καὶ ἥθη . . . φυλάττειν”) during the period of Roman rule. A very similar view on the Romans resonates within Bessarion’s eulogy for the city of Trebizond, which shall be discussed in Chapter 3. Exactly when Laonikos believed the Romans of the East had become Hellenes is ambiguous. Justinian (r. 527–65) is the last ruler in Constantinople whom he called a *basileus* of the Romans, while his interpretation of the *Donation of Constantine* helped him to show that the Romans had already left their *romanitas* in Rome when they moved to Byzantion.⁸²

81 “Ες δὲ δὴ Ῥωμαίους ἐπὶ τὴν τῆς οἰκουμένης μεγίστην ἀρχὴν ἀφικουμένους, ἰσοτάλαντον ἔχοντας τύχην τῇ ἀρετῇ, ἐπιτρέψαντας Ῥώμῃ τῷ μεγίστῳ αὐτῶν ἀρχιερεῖ καὶ διαβάντας ἐς Θράκην, ὑψηγουμένου ἐπὶ τὰδε τοῦ βασιλείως, καὶ Θράκης ἐπὶ χώραν, ἥτις ἐς τὴν Ἀσίαν ἐγγυτάτῳ ὥκηται, Βυζάντιον Ἑλληνίδα πόλιν μητρόπολιν σφῶν ἀποδεικνύντας, πρὸς Πέρσας, ὑφ’ ὧν ἀνήκεστα ἐπεπόνθεισαν, τὸν ἀγῶνα ποιεῖσθαι, Ἑλληνάς τε τὸ ἀπὸ τοῦδε Ῥωμαίοις αὐτοῦ ἐπιμινύντας, γλώτταν μὲν καὶ ἥθη διὰ τὸ πολλῶ πλέονας Ῥωμαίων Ἑλληνας αὐτοῦ ἐπικρατεῖν διὰ τέλους φυλάττειν, τοῦνομα μέντοι μηκέτι κατὰ τὸ πάτριον καλουμένους ἀλλάξασθαι, καὶ τοὺς γε βασιλεῖς Βυζαντίου ἐπὶ τὸ σφᾶς αὐτοὺς Ῥωμαίων βασιλεῖς τε καὶ αὐτοκράτορας σεμνύνεσθαι ἀποκαλεῖν, Ἑλλήνων δὲ βασιλεῖς οὐκέτι οὐδαμῇ ἀξιούν” (Chalkokondyles, ed. Darkó 1922: 4, ll. 3–16; cf. ed. Kaldellis 2014: 1, 6–8). I adopted Kaldellis’ “ἐπὶ τῷ” instead of Darkó’s “ἐπὶ τὸ”.

82 Kaldellis (2014: 74–75, 175). Chalkokondyles contrasts this early phase of peaceful mingling with more recent conflicts between Byzantines and Westerners. He mentions the most important issues: the fact that the Westerners appointed for themselves a “king of the Romans” (“βασιλεὺς Ῥωμαίων”), sometimes of German, sometimes of French extraction; the problem of the religious schism, resulting in the Fourth Crusade (1202–04); and the failed attempt to achieve a Union during the council of Ferrara-Florence (1438–39). See Chalkokondyles (ed. Darkó 1922: 4–5 = ed. Kaldellis 2014: 1, 6–8).

Chalkokondyles' views sharply contrast with the outlook Manuel Chrysoloras presented in his letter to the emperor. Unlike Chrysoloras, Chalkokondyles was utterly uninterested in claiming a Roman heritage for the Byzantines. While Chrysoloras maintained that the Byzantines had 'almost' lost the name of the Hellenes, Laonikos claimed that they had actually lost their ancestral name and called themselves Romans. In reality, he argues, they were essentially Hellenes. According to Chalkokondyles, the self-declared Romans of Byzantium differed in many ways from the Romans of the West, including language and religion. In this way, Laonikos' retrospective de-Romanisation of Byzantium anticipates schools of Greek national history that effectively denied the Roman identity of the Byzantine Empire in order to claim it for the newly invented Greeks of the nineteenth century.⁸³

In the Greek East, as far as the sources can tell, intellectuals generally adhered to the traditional Roman identification.⁸⁴ Unlike Chalkokondyles and the Byzantine intelligentsia in the West, the three most well-known late-Byzantine historians more or less adhered to the traditional labels used by the Byzantines to refer to themselves. Despite the different contexts in which each of them lived and worked, for Kritovoulos, Doukas, and Sphrantzes, the Byzantines were Romans, not Hellenes.⁸⁵ This also goes for the lesser-known vernacular historians Leontios Macheras and George Boustronios, who wrote about the more recent history of Cyprus. The former, writing in the first half of the fifteenth century (and finishing before 1432), calls the Byzantines Romans and the pagans Hellenes in traditional Byzantine fashion. The latter, writing in the second half of the century (and completing his work before 1500), also called the Byzantines Romans.⁸⁶ This sharply contrasts with the usage of the Byzantine intelligentsia in Italy, who usually adopted the Hellenic/Greek instead of the Roman label.

Becoming Greek in Italy: The Disownment of the Romans

The Byzantine intelligentsia in Italy, all in their own ways, felt with Plethon and Laonikos that they were, principally, Hellenes and not Romans: they explicitly

83 See here Kaldellis (2014: 176–77, 207–36).

84 This is now confirmed by the quantitative analysis of Kaplanis (2014).

85 For a succinct overview, see Vryonis (1991) or, with more substantial references, Ditten (1964), not mentioned by Vryonis.

86 See Macheras (ed. University of Athens 2015: §§ 22, 73; §§ 22, 27, 29, 67, 72, 73, 99, 113, 114, 348, 377) and Boustronios (ed. Kechagioglou 1997: 180, A18, K18; 252, A15, K15). In redaction B of Boustronios' text, we also find "Ῥωμαί" (p. 137, B3).

and emphatically presented themselves as the descendants and heirs of the ancient Hellenes. With Plethon and Laonikos they thus shared a sense of specifically Hellenic belonging that was independent of current political or religious boundaries, abandoned traditional claims to Rome, and was ethno-cultural in nature. Although they stemmed from all parts of the later Byzantine world (Constantinople, the Peloponnesus, the Greek islands, Thessaloniki, and the Pontic port of Trebizond), they regarded themselves all as Greeks because they shared learning, language, and a shared origin in the remote past. This is not tantamount to saying that Plethon's vision of the Hellenes was at the origin of their viewpoints. For his former student Bessarion, such influence is of course very likely, as it is for Laonikos. Bessarion's Greekness has a similar secular ethno-cultural basis as does Plethon's in the memoranda, albeit with markedly different emphases: Bessarion's Greekness implied cosmopolitanism over regionalism, expansion and migration over sedentary stability and territoriality, and dealt differently with the Roman tradition.⁸⁷ For others, Plethon's direct influence is less likely or even improbable. George Trapezuntius of Crete, for instance, not only criticised Plethon as well as his suspected sectarian 'followers' but also came from the Cretan context, without connection with the Peloponnesus. His Greekness must have originated in the 'Latin' context of Crete rather than in the 'Hellenic' context of Mistra. If only for this reason, it is hard to generalise about Plethon's direct impact on the Greekness of diaspora.

In addition to the fact that we cannot draw a simple line of influence from Plethon to the diaspora, we must be aware that what Byzantine Greeks in Italy required of their Hellenism was very different. Plethon and later Laonikos presented, from a Greek point of view, a *positive* and *affirmative* image of the Byzantines as descendants of the ancient Hellenes.⁸⁸ For the Greek colony in Italy, however, Greekness was also a *defensive* strategy and a means of adjusting Western Latin standards and ethnographical templates, as Chapter 2 will show. Moreover, most of them—from Plethon's former student Bessarion to his possible grandson Giovanni Gemisto—all tried to work their personal senses of Greekness into a decidedly Christian framework, mostly oriented towards Rome, as some of the case studies demonstrate. In the diaspora, Hellenism gained new significance.

Their identification with the Hellenes and their dissociation from the Romans appears best from the names they used to refer to themselves and

87 See here Kourniakos (2013: 416), who sees Bessarion's Hellenism in terms of a contribution to the Greek identity that Plethon designed for the Byzantines and that Bessarion "perfected" ("perfektionierte, erweiterte und veränderte . . . wie es ihm genehm war").

88 Cf. Kaldellis (2014: 204–05).

their fellows. One of the most famous and influential among the Byzantine Greeks in Italy, Bessarion, regarded himself and his fellow Byzantines as Hellenes *instead of* Romans. In Greek, he called the Byzantines either Hellenes ("Ἕλληνες) or Greeks (Γραικοί), while he conceded the Roman designation 'Ρωμαῖοι completely to speakers of the Latin language (alternatively the Λατῖνοι), the members of the Roman Church, and the ancient Romans (the only exception being the stock phrase "βασιλεὺς 'Ρωμαίων" which he rendered into Latin as "imperator Graecorum" in his correspondence).⁸⁹ The self-referential usage of the label Γραικοί was not entirely uncontested. Although it had originally been used as a less derogatory alternative to "Ἕλληνες, it had fallen into disuse after the ninth century due to its negative association with the word *Graeci* the Latins used to insult the Romans of the East and undermine their Roman claims.⁹⁰ This sense of Latin bias was strong and had by no means faded away in the fifteenth century. When Latins applied the Greek label to the Byzantines, therefore, it was easily interpreted as an insult: the metropolitan of Thracian Medeia, for instance, was indignant at its use by Pope Eugenius IV. "He insults us as he calls us 'Greeks', and this is an outrage", the metropolitan said, according to Syropoulos. "How then shall we depart [to the council in Italy] seeing that he insults us?"⁹¹

Bessarion primarily called the Byzantines Greeks (Γραικοί) when he referred to them in religious contexts (when we would call them the Orthodox), even though the line he drew between 'Hellenes' and 'Greeks' was not too strict.⁹²

89 For his use of *Graeci*, see Bessarion (ed. Mohler 1942c: 491, l. 32; 564, l. 14; 542, ll. 33–37). For Bessarion's usage of the Roman identifier, see e.g. Bessarion (ed. Mohler 1927: 234, ll. 27–39, with 235, ll. 23–34; 496, l. 36–498, l. 6, with 497, l. 32–499, l. 7; 514, l. 36–516, l. 4; 580, l. 16, with 581, l. 16; 602, ll. 21–43, with 603, ll. 18–37; 612, l. 2, with 613, ll. 5–6). For the opposition of Latin versus Greek speakers in terms of "Ἕλληνες versus 'Ρωμαῖοι, see Bessarion (ed. Mohler 1927: 282, l. 1).

90 See Page (2008: 66–67). Page (2008: 87) also observes that the Byzantines used Γραικός mainly ironically or when put in the mouth of a Westerner. Aristotle regarded it as the ancient name of the Hellenes: "αὕτη [ἡ 'Ελλάς ἡ ἀρχαία] δ' ἐστὶ ἡ περὶ Δωδώνη καὶ τὸν Ἀχελῷον . . . ὧκουν γὰρ οἱ Σελλοὶ ἐνταῦθα καὶ οἱ καλούμενοι τότε μὲν Γραικοὶ νῦν δ' "Ἕλληνες" [*Old Hellas is the country around Dodona and Achelöüs . . . Here dwelt the Selloi and the people then called Greeks and now Hellenes*] (Arist. *Mete.* 352b2). See also *FHG* 1.542 (= Parian Marble, 11); Apollod. 1.7.3; Call. *Fr.* 104; Lyc. 532, 891, 1195; Paus. 3.20.6; *S. Fr.* 2, 160 (with the useful note of Pearson on fr. 518). See Hall (2002: 70, 129, 170) for some discussion.

91 "Υβρίζει ἡμᾶς· καλεῖ γὰρ ἡμᾶς Γραικοὺς, καὶ τοῦτό ἐστιν ὕβρις. Πῶς οὖν ἀπελευσόμεθα ἐκεῖ, ἐπεὶ ὕβριζει μας;" (in Syropoulos, ed. Laurent 1971: 124, with 125, n. 5).

92 Note that Bessarion sometimes called the Greek fathers "teachers of the Hellenes" or "Hellenic fathers" (e.g. in Bessarion, ed. Mohler 1942a: 73, l. 23–34; 80, l. 25).

His usage of Γραικοί to refer to the Orthodox is consistent with what we find in the writings of his Byzantine contemporaries, where the Byzantines are also called Greeks instead of Romans or Hellenes.⁹³ In the diaries of Sylvester Syropoulos, for example, recording the council of Ferrara-Florence (1438–39), we find Γραικοί to refer to the Byzantines, and Syropoulos even speaks of the “βασιλεὺς Γραικῶν” when referring to the Eastern Roman emperor.⁹⁴ In the same vein, Isidore of Kiev (another participant in the council) called the Byzantines Greeks (Γραικοί, often in opposition to the Latins) both in his *Sermones* and in his *Ad synodum Florentinae*.⁹⁵ This equally applies to Markos Eugenikos in his *Dialogue* between a Latin and a Greek and Scholarios in his *Disputationes Florentinae*.⁹⁶

For Bessarion, the Ἕλληνες, unlike the Γραικοί, did not by definition represent a community of religion. In his usage of the Hellenic names, Bessarion infused accepted meanings with new connotations that had been controversial in Byzantium. In some contexts, he preserved the ‘pagan’ connotations of the Hellenic terminology,⁹⁷ while in other circumstances he used it to denote the community of Greek-speakers or those who had received *paideia*, often in opposition to the Latins.⁹⁸ He also used it to denote the ancient Greeks. Unlike most Byzantine intellectuals and literati, Bessarion did not see the

93 A notable exception is Theodore Gazes, who in a letter to his brothers (November 1451) used Ἕλληνες and Ῥωμαῖοι to refer to the Byzantine Orthodox and Roman Catholics respectively (Gazes, ed. Leone 1990: 48–49, ll. 17–31 = Bessarion, ed. Mohler 1942c: 573, ll. 7–19).

94 Syropoulos (ed. Laurent 1971: 244).

95 See, for example, Isidore (ed. Candal and Hofmann 1971: 65, l. 27; 84, l. 24; 95, l. 1; 118, l. 36).

96 Eugenikos (ed. Petit 1977: *passim*) and Scholarios (ed. Jugie et al. 1928: 324, l. 20; 330, l. 10; 331, l. 29; 364, l. 37; 375, l. 1, 18). Note that Ianus Lascaris (ed. Meschini 1976: 67, no. 44, l. 12) used the word once outside the ecclesiastical context in one of his Greek epigrams.

97 In his *In calumniatorem Platonis*, for instance, Bessarion called Plato and Aristotle Ἕλληνες, which he rendered in Latin as *gentiles*. This was common usage in Greek Christian literature. See here Bessarion (ed. Mohler 1927: 108, ll. 19–20, with the Latin on p. 109, ll. 17–18; 146, l. 15, with 146, l. 17; 154, ll. 13–14, with 155, ll. 12–15; 154, l. 23, with 155, l. 24; 156, l. 24, with 157, ll. 24–25; 166, l. 38, with 167, l. 33; 176, l. 33, with 177, l. 33; 186, l. 2; 618, l. 1). See also Bessarion (ed. Mohler 1927: 140, ll. 12–13, with 141, ll. 14–15; 154, l. 12, with 155, l. 14; 178, l. 24; 300, l. 16, with 301, l. 15; cf. 384, ll. 36–37, with 385, ll. 35–36 and 402, ll. 8–9, with 403, ll. 7–8; 310, l. 23–24, with 311, l. 23–24; 314, l. 13; 364, l. 22, with 365, l. 20; 444, ll. 9–10, with 445, ll. 10–11).

98 Examples of this usage are legion: Bessarion (ed. Mohler 1927: 8, ll. 12–35, with the Latin text on p. 9, ll. 15–35; 24, ll. 23–28, with 25, ll. 24–29; 84, l. 31–86, l. 3, with 85, l. 36–87, l. 6; 168, ll. 6–8, with 169, ll. 5–7; 201, ll. 13–14; 220, ll. 19–25; 538, ll. 3–10, with 537, l. 12–539, l. 2; 630, ll. 6–9, with 631, ll. 20–22).

ancient Greeks as a foreign people, but on the contrary strongly identified with them. As we shall see in our discussion of his *Encomium to Trebizond* in Chapter 3, for him the Hellenes constituted a group that was tied together not only by a shared language, but also by origin and descent. Elsewhere, Bessarion defined the Hellenes as a *genos* with specific mental and intellectual features and a distinct culture (see Chapter 3, pp. 103–07). When he lamented the fall of Byzantium, he deplored the destruction of the “remaining Hellenes” and feared the “complete obliteration of the Hellenes”.⁹⁹ Bessarion thus regarded the Hellenes of his time in terms of a wider ethno-cultural community transcending religious, political, and politico-religious boundaries. For him, as for most other Byzantines in Italy, the Hellenes were also not confined to any specific place, but were a community that existed independently of dynastic or regional boundaries. Greekness, by replacing political and religious community with ethnic and cultural unity, enabled Byzantines to imagine the Hellenes as a group transcending dynastic, political, and religious borders.

Bessarion’s usage is characteristic of that of the Byzantines in his circle as well as for the Byzantine intelligentsia in Italy generally. In their Greek works, *dotti* such as Theodore Gazes, Andronikos Kallistos, Michael Apostoles, Nikolaos Sekoundinos, and others all referred to themselves and their compatriots as Greeks or Hellenes instead of Romans. In his threnody on Constantinople, for example, Kallistos referred to Hellenes instead of Romans to designate the Byzantines collectively.¹⁰⁰ He bemoaned the fortunes of the Hellenes, called Constantinople their common hearth, and referred to the Byzantines collectively as the “flock of the Hellenes”.¹⁰¹ The same usage can be found in the letters of Michael Apostoles, who fled from Constantinople to Venetian Crete and was closely connected with Bessarion’s circle in Rome. In his letters, addressed to a mixed audience of Greeks and Italians, he called the Byzantines

99 Bessarion (ed. Mohler 1942c: 479, ll. 11–12; 480, ll. 11–12; 482, ll. 13–14).

100 Kallistos (ed. Migne 1866b: 1131, 1133, 1137, 1138, 1140). On Kallistos, see mainly Emilio Bigi’s entry in *DBI* s.v. “Andronico Callisto” (with sources and scholarly bibliography up to 1953). For his contribution to Greek learning in Italy, see mainly N.G. Wilson (2000: 146–47, 152–54). See also Lambros (1908) (with Nicol 1994: 97–98), Diller (1967), and Monfasani (1985).

101 “ἡ κοινὴ τῶν Ἑλλήνων ἐστία”, “τὸ τῶν Ἑλλήνων ἐσμὸν”, “ἡ τῶν Ἑλλήνων πληθύς” (Kallistos, ed. Migne: 1866b: 1131, 1133). At the same time, Constantinople remained “New Rome” (see Kallistos, ed. Migne 1866b: 1133). See also Kallistos’ letter to George Palaiologos Disypatos (1476), in which he speaks of “τὸ δυστυχὲς τῶν Ἑλλήνων γένος” (Kallistos, ed. Migne 1866a: 1020). For Disypatos, see Papadopoulos (1962: 95, no. 189). On the letter, see Harris (1999: 197–98).

Hellenes.¹⁰² Additionally, he called them Greeks, mainly in the context of the church of Constantinople.¹⁰³ Most importantly, he never called them Romans, a label which he reserved for the Romans of the West, the Italians, whom he regarded as a *genos* like that of the Hellenes.¹⁰⁴ The same patterns of identification are in the works of later generations of Byzantine scholars in Italy such as Apostoles' son Arsenios, Markos Mousouros, Ianus Lascaris, and others. Both Arsenios and Mousouros called their compatriots Hellenes instead of Romans both collectively and individually, both for Latin and for Greek audiences.¹⁰⁵ When Mousouros placed Lascaris on a par with the Athenians

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- 102 The Greek letters of M. Apostoles offer multiple examples of this usage, for example: “ταῖς τῶν Ἑλλήνων ἀχθόμενοι συμφοραῖς”, “τὰ τῶν Γραικῶν”, “τὰ τῶν Ἑλλήνων”, “τῶν Ἑλλήνων γεγονότες τοῦ γένους”, “τοῖς Γραικοῖς ἐξουθενημένον” (ed. Noiret 1889: 70–71; ed. Stefec 2013: 79); “τὸ πολύπονον γένος Ἑλλήνων”, “τὰ δίκαια τῶν σῶν Ἑλλήνων τηρῶν”, “ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἑλλήνων” (ed. Noiret 1889: 72–73; ed. Stefec 2013: 81); “ὁ τοῦ γένους νυνὶ τῶν Ἑλλήνων προστάτης καὶ κόσμος τῆς ἐκκλησίας”, referring to Bessarion (ed. Noiret 1889: 77; ed. Stefec 2013: 84); “ὁ τῆς Πελοποννήσου ποτὲ ἡγεμὼν καὶ βασιλέων οὐκ ὀλίγων Ἑλλήνων ἀπόγονος”, referring to Thomas Palaeologus (ed. Noiret 1889: 82; Stefec 2013: 89); “τῶν νῦν ὄντων Ἑλλήνων καὶ Ῥωμαίων σοφῶν”, referring to the contemporary Greek and Latin intelligentsia (ed. Noiret 1889: 88; ed. Stefec 2013: 94); “Χριστιανοὶ πάντες, οἱ τ’ Εὐρωπαῖοι καὶ ὅσοι λείψανα τῶν Ἑλλήνων” (ed. Noiret 1889: 144; ed. Stefec 2013: 114); “οἱ τῶν Ἑλλήνων ἀμείνους” (ed. Noiret 1885: 117; ed. Stefec 2013: 117); “τῶν Ἑλλήνων τὰ πράγματα” (ed. Noiret 1889: 121; ed. Stefec 2013: 120); “τὸ κάλλος σώζοντα τῶν Ἑλλήνων”, referring to Manuel Chrysaphis (cf. Noiret 1889: 30), “ὑμῖν ἐμὲ συνδιάγειν Ἑλληνα Ἑλλησι” (ed. Legrand 1885: 239–40; ed. Stefec 2013: 48); with reference to Bessarion: “ὅς οὐχ ὅσον τὸ γένος τῶν Ἑλλήνων κοσμεῖ, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ Ῥωμαίων καὶ Ἰταλῶν” (ed. Legrand 1885: 249; ed. Stefec 2013: 66); “τὸ γένος . . . τῶν Ἑλλήνων” (ed. Legrand 1885: 249; ed. Stefec 2013: 67). This usage is also attested elsewhere, for example in Apostoles' treatise against Demetrius Chalcondylas (M. Apostoles, ed. Stefec 2010: *passim* but esp. p. 138: “τοῦ σοφωτάτου τῶν νῦν ὄντων Ἑλλήνων”), and in his tract against Theodore Gazes: “Ἑλληνες ὄντες καὶ τὴν ἀχαριστίαν κακίζοντες” (Apostoles, ed. Powell 1938: 132 l. 24), “οἱ . . . τῷ γένει τῶν Ἑλλήνων ἀνδραποδισμοί” (p. 134 ll. 98–99), and “Ἑλληνας ἰταλίζοντας” (p. 134, ll. 108–09).
- 103 In these cases, Apostoles (ed. Noiret 1889: 70–71 = ed. Stefec 2013: 77; ed. Noiret 1889: 89 = ed. Stefec 2013: 84) complains that his fellow Greeks bullied him because of his Latin sympathies, referring to the Greeks as adherents of the Byzantine rite in opposition to the Roman Church. Sometimes, however, he used the word outside the confessional context, as when he referred to Cardinal Bessarion as the foremost of both Europeans and Γραικοί, meaning the Greeks collectively, and not only the Orthodox faction (Apostoles, ed. Noiret 1889: 76; ed. Stefec 2013: 84).
- 104 About Bessarion: “ὅς οὐχ ὅσον τὸ γένος τῶν Ἑλλήνων κοσμεῖ, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ Ῥωμαίων καὶ Ἰταλῶν” (Apostoles, ed. Legrand 1885: 249; ed. Stefec 2013: 66).
- 105 Arsenios Apostoles: “ἀπόδοτε τὸ πανταχοῦ διεσπαρμένον γένος ἡμῶν τῇ πατρίδι· ἐπανασώσατε τὰς ἑλληνίδας τῶν πόλεων· νομίσατε τῶν Ἑλλήνων ἀκούειν βοῶντων ἱκετῶν καὶ πρὸς ἐλευθερίαν

and Spartans of ancient Hellas, he contrasted them with those “who we are nowadays, called Greeks or Romans”.¹⁰⁶ In Latin and Italian, Byzantines could not differentiate in this way between Hellenes and Greeks and complied with Latin usage. While in his Greek works Lascaris referred to his compatriots as Hellenes or, incidentally, Greeks, in Latin and Italian he called them *Graeci* and *greci*.¹⁰⁷ Further examples from the Quattrocento are legion. In his *De familia Otthomanorum* (ca. 1456), for instance, Nikolaos Sekoundinos referred to the

ἐπεκκαλουμένων” (ed. Manoussakas 1958: 28, ll. 128–31; p. 31 ll. 37–41); “ἐπὶ τὸ τοὺς τῶν Ἑλλήνων λόγους ἐπανακτῆσασθαι” (p. 32, l. 4); “μὴ μόνον τοῖς Ἑσπερίοις, ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῖς Ἑλλήσιν” (p. 34, l. 7); “Γραικῶν...τὴν Ἑκκλησίαν” (ed. Bandini 1764: 86); “τῶν ταλαιπώρων Ἑλλήνων” (ed. Legrand 1885a: 171); “Ἑλληνας ἰταλίζοντας” (ed. Legrand 1885b: 223); “ὁ τοῦ γένους τῶν Ἑλλήνων ἐπισημότατος”, referring to Ianus Lascaris (ed. Legrand 1885c: 340); “τὸ πολύπονον γένος Ἑλλήνων, Ἑλλήνων βοώντων καὶ πρὸς ἐλευθερίαν ἐπεκκαλουμένων, ἐν Ἰταλίᾳ Ἑλληνας ἰταλίζοντας” (p. 341); “ἐγὼ Ἑλληνα ὦν τὸ γένος” (p. 343). On Arsenios Apostoles, see Alessandro Pratesi’s entry in *DBI* s.v. “Apostolo, Arsenio” (with sources and scholarly bibliography up to 1909). Markos Mousouros: “Λασκάρεως τοῦ ὄντως Ἑλληνοῦς”, referring to Ianus Lascaris (ed. Belloni 2002: 652, l. 35); “Ἑλληνι”, referring to Demetrius Chalcondylas (p. 671, l. 28); “τῶν καθ’ ἡμᾶς Ἑλλήνων” (ed. Legrand 1885a: 49); “οἱ γὰρ ἀφ’ ἱρῆς Ἑλλάδος Ἑλλάνων παισὶ πρέπουσι τύποι” (p. 59); “τοῖς ἐκασταχοῦ τῆς Ἰταλίας Ἑλλησι διαζῶσιν” (ed. Legrand 1885b: 318). See also Justin Dekadyos: “τῶν νῦν Ἑλλήνων” (in A. Apostoles, ed. Manoussakas 1958: 17, l. 9). On Mousouros, see Paola Pellegrini’s entry in *DBI*, s.v. “Musuro, Marco” (with sources and scholarly bibliography up to 2002) and, most recently, Ferreri (2014) and F. Pontani (2014). For documents and manuscripts relevant to Mousouros’ biography, see also Cataldi Palau (2004). An assessment of his contribution to Greek studies in Italy is N.G. Wilson (2000: 194–211).

106 “Ἐξοχα δ’ αὖ περὶ κῆρι φιλεῖ δύο, τὸν μὲν ἀφ’ ἱρῆς | Ἑλλάδος οὐχ ἓνα τῶν οἱ πελόμεσθα τανῦν, | Ῥωμαῖοι Γραικοὶ τε καλούμενοι, ἀλλὰ παλαιοῖς | Ἀτθίδος ἢ Σπάρτης εἵκελον ἡμιθέοις· | Λασκαρέων γενεῆς ἐρικυδέος ἄρκον ἄωτον...” [*Most of all, he loves two men in his heart: one of them is from holy Greece, not one of those who we are nowadays, called Greeks or Romans, but equal to the ancient half-gods of Attica and Sparta: the finest flower of the very famous race of the Laskarids...*] (Mousouros, ed. Legrand 1885c: 108, ll. 55–58 = ed. Siphakis 1954: 880, ll. 55–58). Note that in his Latin translation of the hymn, preserved in BML, Plut. 36.35 (fols. 27^r–30^r), Ianus Lascaris translated “Ῥωμαῖοι” with “Romani” (fol. 28^r: “Romani Graecique vocati”) (cf. Gentile 1986: 56).

107 Lascaris’ Greek poems and letters: I. Lascaris (ed. Meschini 1976: 73, no. 52, ll. 2, 4; 57, no. 30, l. 11; 67, no. 45, l. 15; ed. Pontani 1992: 380, ll. 26–27; 386, l. 5). His Italian treatises: “imperio de’ Greci”, “li greci gentilhomini”, “Thraci, Macedoni, Thesali, Peloponensi et altri Greci et Illyrici”, “Greci delle nobilissime prime case e congiunti a quelle”, “noi Greci” (I. Lascaris, ed. Pontani 1985: 266, l. 354; 267, l. 382; 280, l. 700; 293, l. 87; 303, l. 226; 313, l. 466; 336, l. 921; cf. 282, l. 761). For his Latin works, see Chapter 5.

Byzantines as “Graeci”, and he even refers to the Byzantine emperor as “imperator Graecorum” just as Bessarion did in his Latin correspondence.¹⁰⁸

The general adoption of the Greek identifier by the Byzantine intelligentsia in Italy often implied a rejection of the Roman identifier originally associated with the Byzantine Empire. In one of his Greek epigrams, Lascaris explained the misery of the Hellenes as resulting from the fact that they had chosen to abandon, apart from their ancient character and wisdom (“ἔθῃ”, “σοφίην”), even the *name* of their ancestors (“προγόνων . . . ὄνομα”).¹⁰⁹ In his unpublished commentary on Lascaris’ epigrams, the Greek humanist Christopher Kondoleon of Cythera made this idea as explicit as possible: the miserable situation of the Greeks would not be ameliorated “as long as they hate the name of their own ancestors: the Hellenes (as they do not want to be called Hellenes but Romans instead), and as long as they do not aim for the customs and wisdom of their ancestors, but lead their lives in ignorance and stupidity”.¹¹⁰

The rejection of the Roman label normally happened implicitly, but one elucidating example of the disownment of the Romans occurs in a treatise on the Attic calendar (ca. 1470) by Theodore Gazes, one of Bessarion’s many Greek protégés in Rome, who taught Greek in Mantua and Ferrara and is known mainly for his Latin translations, his successful Greek grammar, and his Greek translation of Cicero’s *De senectute*.¹¹¹ In his treatise, Gazes reconstructed the Attic calendar and offered an explanation for its having fallen into disuse among the Greeks.¹¹² Gazes’ explanation allows us to understand how

108 “negligentia Graecorum”, “inter Graecos”, “Graecorum ductu”, “Graecorum viribus”, “Graecos”, “Graecorum imperium”, “manus Graecorum”, “naves Graecorum”, “emissus a Graecis”, “imperator Graecorum”, “Graecis” (Sekoundinos, ed. Philippides 2007: 56, §2; 60, §5; 62, §5; 70, §7; 74, §8; 78, §8).

109 I. Lascaris (ed. Meschini 1976: 57, no. 30, ll. 8–12).

110 BAV, Vat. Gr. 1352, fols. 225^v–226^r (cf. Meschini 1976: 139): “Οὐκ ἐτι Ζεὺς εὐνοῦς τοῖς Ἑλλήσι ἔως οὗ τὸ τῶν Ἑλλήνων τῶν ἑαυτῶν προγόνων ὄνομα μισοῦσιν (οὐ θέλουσι γὰρ Ἑλληνες καλεῖσθαι, ἀλλὰ Ῥωμαῖοι), οὔτε τὰ ἐκείνων ἥθη καὶ σοφίην περιποιῶνται, ἀλλ’ ἀγνοίᾳ καὶ ἀπαιδευσίᾳ τὸν βίον διάγουσι”. On Kondoleon (Contoleon), see Meschini (1973) and F. Pontani (2005: 459–460, 496, 509).

111 For a detailed overview of Gazes’ life and works, see the entry of Concetta Bianca in *DBI* s.v. “Gaza, Teodoro” (with bibliography up to 1998) (some additional references to relevant scholarship are in Jonathan Harris’ entry in *EGHT* s.v. “Gaza, Theodore”). His Greek translation of Cicero was edited by Salanitro (1987). For Gazes’ career in Ferrara and the more recent bibliography, see Tissoni (2009: 11–23, 74–77). N.G. Wilson (2000: 46–47, 60–61, 99–105) offers an assessment of Gazes’ contribution to Greek studies in the Italian Renaissance. Monfasani (2002c) discusses Gazes as a philosopher.

112 Gazes’ reconstruction of the Athenian calendar was not an isolated project and seems to fit into a reviving interest in ancient chronology in the fifteenth century, both in Byzantium and in Italy. Gemistos Plethon (whose calendar is prominent in Gazes’ treatise) had special



ILLUSTRATION 2 *Tobias Stimmer, portrait of Theodore Gazes. From Paolo Giovio, Elogia virorum literis illustrium (Basle: Petrus Perna, 1577), p. 33. DFG-Projekt CAMENA, Heidelberg-Mannheim.*

the Byzantine intelligentsia redefined the Roman tradition from Constantine the Great onwards as something external and foreign:

A reason for the ignorance of those before us regarding this [i.e. the Attic calendar] is the fact that the Romans set matters straight concerning the year-cycle, and ruled the Hellenic people like the other peoples. And the

interest in ancient Greek chronology (Anastos 1948). Cyriac of Ancona moreover outlined the Roman calendar for Constantine Palaeologus in Greek in 1448 (Lambros 1930, Castellani 1896). Italian humanists were particularly interested in the Athenian calendar, which bore on their interpretation of Greek historiography. It seems that, before Gazes, Manuel Chrysoloras composed a guide to the Greek calendar, which is now lost (see here Botley 2006). A concise overview of the awakening interest in chronology and calendars more generally is Anthony Grafton's entry in *CT* s.v. "Calendars, Chronicles, Chronology".

Greeks, having lost the purity and elegance of their speech, changed towards the speech of their ruler, as usually happens, and of the Roman words they used many others and especially the names of the months, mixing them with their own. After having received the colonies of the Romans, they even now still call themselves Romans instead of Hellenes, and used the names of the Romans for the months as if they were their own.¹¹³

Historically, Gazes saw the people whom we now call Byzantines as Hellenes whom the Romans initially subjected (after the Battle of Corinth in 146 BC). After almost 500 years of Roman rule, however, Gazes' Hellenes 'received' the Roman colonies when Constantine the Great transferred the capital of his Empire to Byzantium and renamed it after himself.¹¹⁴ Gazes claimed that, after this transfer of empire, the Hellenes had taken over the name of the Romans (which for him explained why his compatriots still called themselves Romans) and had also adopted their cultural practices as if they were their own (such as naming the months).¹¹⁵ For this reason, Gazes found, the 'Romans' of the East are really Hellenes who, during different phases of their history and for various reasons adapted their language, customs, and name to those of the Romans, at first because the Romans ruled over them, and later because the Hellenes

113 "Τῆς δὲ περὶ ταῦτα ἀγνοίας τοῖς πρὸ ἡμῶν αἴτιον τὸ Ῥωμαίους ἅμα καὶ διορθῶσαι τὰ περὶ τὸν ἐνιαυτον καὶ ἄρξαι ὥσπερ τῶν ἄλλων ἐθνῶν καὶ τοῦ Ἑλληνικοῦ [πρὸς γὰρ τῷ ἄρχειν ἐτέρων]. καὶ τὸ τῆς φωνῆς δὴ καθαρὸν, τὸ κομψὸν Ἑλλήνες ἀπολωλεκότες, πρὸς τὴν τῶν ἀρχόντων φωνὴν ἢ φιλεῖ γίγνεσθαι ἐξίσταντο καὶ τῶν Ῥωμαϊκῶν ὀνομάτων ἄλλοις τε πολλοῖς καὶ δὴ καὶ ταῖς τῶν μηνῶν προσηγορίαις τοῖς σφετέροις ἀναμιγνύντες ἐχρῶντο· δεξιόμενοι τε ἀποικίας Ῥωμαίων αὐτοὺς τε ἄχρι καὶ νῦν Ῥωμαίους ἀντὶ Ἑλλήνων καλοῦσι καὶ ὥσπερ οἰκείαις ταῖς τῶν Ῥωμαίων ἀμφὶ τοὺς μῆνας χρῶνται ὀνομασίαις" (Gazes 1495: fol. avⁱ; 1536: fols. 112–13). I left "πρὸς γὰρ τῷ ἄρχειν ἐτέρων" ("that is in addition to the ruling of others") outside the translation and placed it between square brackets in the Greek text, because it seems to be an intrusive gloss explaining "καὶ τοῦ Ἑλληνικοῦ" (which might also be the case for "τὸ κομψὸν" explaining "τὸ καθαρὸν").

114 Compare the curious testimony of George Amiroutzes, who saw the Romans as just like the Macedonians: as foreign occupiers who eventually handed over their empire to the Greeks out of admiration for their civilisation (Amiroutzes, ed. De La Cruz Palma 2000: 4, ll. 6–20). Gazes may also refer to the moment in the fifth century AD when the Western Roman Empire had definitively collapsed and the Eastern Roman Empire remained to the Greek-speaking emperors (and the Hellenes who so 'received' the Roman colonies).

115 Compare in this context the statement of Trapezuntius (ed. Monfasani 1984g: 299, §6), also recording that after the transferral of the *imperium* the Greeks began to use the Roman names of the months.

stepped into the red shoes of the Roman emperors. This comes close to what Laonikos Chalkokondyles told us in more detail in his history (see above, pp. 46–51). Apart from rejecting the Roman identifier, Gazes also regarded Roman influence on Hellenic culture as disastrous, since in his view it perverted the purity (“τὸ καθαρὸν”) and elegance (“τὸ κομψόν”) of the Greek language. In this respect, Gazes principally contrasts with Manuel Chrysoloras, who had asserted that the Byzantines had almost lost the name of their Greek ancestors but eventually retained a Greco-Roman compound identity.

Interestingly, another protégé of Bessarion’s, Constantine Lascaris, offered a similar analysis in a different context in a letter to the humanist Giorgio Valla regarding the meaning and etymology of the Greek transliterations ὁφφίκιον (Latin *officium*) and ὁφφικιάλιος (Latin *officialis*). “Although [the words] are used by us”, Lascaris wrote,

they are Roman words, and we employ them as if they were our own due to our habitual use of them ever since the Romans became masters over the Hellenes and in particular from the moment that Constantine the first established his marvellous *patris*.¹¹⁶

In the past, Byzantines had sometimes also referred to Latin words in Greek, but then they had used them to corroborate their claims to the Roman legacy. In the thirteenth century, for example, Patriarch Joseph adduced precisely the word ὁφφίκιον to justify, in the context of Latin polemic, the Byzantines calling themselves Romans.¹¹⁷ Gazes and Constantine Lascaris, on the contrary, were not interested in claiming (back) a Roman cultural or political legacy for the Byzantines, but rather the contrary. They perceived the Roman impact on Greek civilisation (its calendrical system and its language) as an externally imposed and foreign intervention in Greek affairs, culminating in the adoption of the Roman name. Just like Chalkokondyles’ de-Romanisation of the Byzantines, the anti-Romanism of some Hellenes anticipates arguments formulated in broader terms and with wider implications by much later Greek national historians eager to brush away the Roman aspects of what they had begun to represent as medieval Greek and not Roman history.

¹¹⁶ “Τὸ ὁφφίκιον καὶ ὁ ὁφφικιάλιος, εἰ καὶ παρ’ ἡμῖν λέγονται, ἀλλὰ Ῥωμαίων φωναὶ εἰσὶ καὶ χρώμεθα διὰ τὴν συνήθειαν ὡς οἰκείαις, ἐξ ὅτου Ῥωμαῖοι ἐγκρατεῖς Ἑλλήνων ἐγένοντο καὶ μάλιστα ἐξ ὅτου Κωνσταντῖνος ἐκεῖνος τὴν θαυμαστὴν ἐκείνην ὁκοδόμησε πατρίδα” (C. Lascaris, ed. Martínez Manzano 1994: 171, ll. 7–11). On C. Lascaris, see Chapter 5, p. 195, n. 115.

¹¹⁷ Kaldellis (2007: 384).

By no means did all Byzantine Hellenes share Gazes' view of the Romans as dominant interlopers who had destroyed the original integrity of Hellenism. Bessarion, for instance, regarded the Romans as a good-natured and friendly people that had never posed any serious danger to the continuity of Hellenism (this is discussed in Chapter 3). What they shared, however, was their identification with the ancient Hellenes and their disinterest in claiming the traditional Roman tradition of Byzantium for themselves collectively.

Although the *dotti bizantini* in Italy commonly presented themselves as Hellenes or Greeks and rejected Romanness, their vision of what it meant to be a descendant of the ancient Greeks could differ significantly from individual to individual and over time. This 'multiplicity' of Greekness will be a central topic running through the case studies in the second part of the book. In the works of the Byzantine intelligentsia in Italy, we find many of the features we have encountered in the works of Plethon and Chalkokondyles: in particular, their secular outlook on the Hellenes, their anxiety over cultural preservation, their dissociation from the Romans, and their territorialisation of the cultural space of Hellenism. Even so, these similarities must not obscure the important differences between 'Plethonian' Hellenism, continued by Laonikos, and the Greekness of the Byzantine colony in Italy. In the diaspora, Byzantines had to negotiate between their commitments to their host societies and their loyalty to the homeland. While Plethon's Greekness can be regarded as an act of intellectual resistance to traditional structures of church and state as well as the failure of Byzantine humanism to respond to contemporary challenges,¹¹⁸ the Hellenism of the Byzantine intelligentsia in Italy was a response to very different concerns. Especially after 1453, the question was not how to reform Byzantine society but how to preserve the Greek legacy abroad and move the West towards a crusade against the Ottoman Turks to deliver Greece. The audience of the 'Italo-Greeks' was, moreover, largely Latin, not Greek. The implications of this changing situation for their sense of Greekness will be the topic of the next chapter.

118 Cf. Siniossoglou (2011: 24–25).

Making the Best of It: The Negotiation of Greekness in Italy

This chapter traces the principal tensions between Latin and Byzantine perspectives on the Hellenes and their heritage. The very few previous case studies of Byzantine self-presentation paid little if any attention to Latin perceptions of the Byzantine Greeks. We need this perspective in order to understand why the Byzantine intelligentsia in Italy embraced the Greek identifiers in the first place (see Chapter 1, pp. 51–62) and in what ways they manipulated them to their advantage. Especially after 1453, the Byzantine Greeks in Italy were dependent on Latin support, not only financially, in terms of professional positions and career, but also in terms of what they wanted to achieve culturally and politically: the preservation of the Greek legacy and the liberation of their homeland. This means that they had to accept, at least to a certain degree, Latin perceptions of themselves, beginning with the name traditionally assigned to them in the Latin West (*Graeci*). Starting from the premise that names are not merely descriptive identifiers but also furnish evaluations, this chapter deals with the question of what it meant for the Byzantines to be called Greeks in Italy. After sketching how the Italian humanists adopted the medieval tradition of calling the Byzantines Greeks, it shows how they also infused Greekness with new meanings that the Greeks anticipated, manipulated, or tried to discard. Although Latin views of the Greeks have been mapped before, there has generally been less attention paid to their problematic relationship with the Byzantine Greek perspective.¹

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- 1 Previous discussions specifically devoted to fifteenth-century Italian views on the Byzantine Greeks are Marinescu (1935), regarding the attitude of Pope Nicholas V towards the Byzantine Empire; Hunger (1987), exploring prejudices associated with the Greeks and the names applied to them; Bisaha (2004: 118–134), explaining Italian perceptions of the Greeks and their crusade appeals (with attention to the views of, among others, Salutati, Poggio, Tignosi, and Filelfo); Agapiou (2007), examining the attitudes of Enea Silvio Piccolomini in particular; Mastrogianni (2013), focusing on the figure of the *Graeculus barbatus* as a common humanist way of stereotyping the Greeks in the fifteenth century; and Lamers (forthcoming), exploring the notion of ‘cultural unease’ with Hellenism in Italian humanism with particular emphasis on the views of Francesco Filelfo. Wulfram (2012) moreover explores the ways in which Italian humanists represented Manuel Chrysoloras as a cultural icon and so deindividualised him. Bell (2011) offers an extensive discussion of the visual representations of the Greeks in Italian art (1438–72).

In discussions of how Byzantine Greek scholars in Italy either rejected or retained their 'Greek identity', Latin humanism has sometimes been regarded as an impediment to Greek identity or Greek patriotism. This view not only sees Greek patriotism and humanist cosmopolitanism as mutually exclusive phenomena,² but also considers humanist rhetoric to be a serious impediment to the very articulation of Greek patriotism.³ Sharing the observation of Caspar Hirschi that Italian humanism catalysed the emerging competition among European humanists,⁴ I assume with him that Italian cultural hegemony forced non-Italians to position themselves vis-à-vis the Italians and to seek means to be distinctive even without the close connection with Rome the Italians could claim for themselves.⁵ The Byzantine Greek intelligentsia in Italy entered the emergent national competition in a similar fashion, which helps explain why they embraced their Greek heritage to the point of eclipsing their traditional claims to Rome. This chapter also moves away from the idea that the transformation of Hellenism in the Italian diaspora, or the transformation from 'Romans' to 'Greeks', primarily resulted from opposition to the Ottoman Turks.⁶ Representing radical otherness for most Byzantine Greeks, the Turks indeed gave the classic dichotomy between barbarians and Hellenes new relevance and meaning and more generally helped to articulate a sharper idea of European civilisation.⁷ As this chapter shows, however, the Hellenism of the Byzantine intelligentsia in Italy was principally shaped, in multiple ways, by their interaction with Latin humanists.

The Imposition of Greekness

When the Byzantines arrived in Italy, they were welcomed as Greeks. What had been a daring experiment in later Byzantium had been the norm in the West

2 See, for instance, the series of contributions of Irmscher (1961, 1964, 1976), in which he asked whether three prominent Byzantine refugees (Theodore Gazes, George Trapezuntius of Crete, and Bessarion) cherished their Hellenism or turned their back on it after their emigration.

3 This idea especially resonates in Binner (1980), who offers the only more or less detailed discussion of late- and post-Byzantine crusade appeals. See also Binner (1971) for a synopsis.

4 This idea is expanded in Hirschi (2012: esp. 142–56).

5 The general importance of the humanist movement for the emergence of patriotism and early forms of nationalism has been stressed in several studies, most importantly Helmchen (2004), Hirschi (2005, 2012), and Munkler (1998).

6 This was suggested by Bisaha (2004: 133).

7 See here Hankins (1995).

for centuries. Calling the Byzantines Greeks instead of Romans has a long history in the Latin West, going back to the ninth century. After Pope Leo III had crowned Charlemagne Emperor of the Romans in 800, Latins began to undermine the Roman claims of the Byzantines. While the Byzantines themselves never stopped calling themselves Romans, Western sources, from the Middle Ages onwards, reflect an anti-Byzantine bias that denied the Roman legacy to the Byzantines by calling them Greeks.⁸ The underlying idea was that the coronation of Charlemagne entailed neither a division of the Roman Empire (the *divisio imperii*) nor a renovation of the occidental Empire (the *renovatio imperii*), but the transferral of the *imperium Romanum* from the Greeks to the West (the *translatio imperii*).⁹

Italian historians of the fifteenth century adopted the practice of calling the Byzantines Greeks instead of Romans and thus perpetuated a Western tradition that predated the Byzantines' own self-declared Greekness.¹⁰ When, for instance, Flavio Biondo discussed the Gothic-Byzantine Wars (535–54) in his famous account of the decline of the Roman Empire, he presented it as a war between Goths and Greeks, although he did call Justinian "Roman Emperor".¹¹ Similarly, he saw the war of Pandulf Ironhead against the Byzantines (968) as a war to repel the Greeks "who had dared to assist the Saracens against the Roman emperor" (then Otto I).¹² In the exceptional case that Italian humanists did call the Byzantines collectively Romans (as did, for example, Palmieri in his *Liber de temporibus*) they denoted the Byzantines before the Carolingians, i.e. before the *imperium Romanum* moved from Byzantium to Charlemagne's lands.¹³ The idea behind this was that after the *translatio imperii*, the Greeks of the Roman East lost the 'Roman' dignity which they had enjoyed as the

8 See here esp. Kaldellis (2014: 216–29).

9 Arbaci (1969: 1–26). Note that the details about the coronation of Charlemagne (such as the exact date of the event and the pope involved) differed. See on this for the medieval period in particular Goez (1958: 62–236).

10 As a sample, I examined (in alphabetical order): Accolti (1544); Bembo (ed. Ulery 2007); Biondo (1483); Biondo (ed. White 2005); Bruni (ed. Di Pierro 1926; ed. Hankins 2001, 2004); *Conciliarium* (ed. Alberigo and Dossetti 1973); Crivelli (ed. Zimolo 1948); Filelfo (ed. Gualdo Rosa 1964); Foresti (1485); Maffei (1552); Palmieri (ed. Scaramella 1906); Piccolomini (ed. Van Heck 1984); Platina (ed. Gaida 1913); Sabellico (1535).

11 Biondo (1484: fols. Cv^v, Di^r, Ev^r, Kviii^v).

12 Biondo (1484: fol. Kviii^v): "Maius tunc Othoni et Pandulfo caput ferreo negotium fuit Graecos repellere qui Saracenis per indicias foederatis adversus imperator Romanum opem ferre conati sunt".

13 In his *Liber de temporibus*, Matteo Palmieri called the Byzantines *Romani* in this account of world history until the end of the eighth century (ed. Scaramella 1906: 61, ll. 12–14,

political successors of the Romans. However, generally, Italian humanists also called the pre-Carolingian Byzantines Greeks. Francesco Filelfo, for example, observed that “the pope transferred the *imperium* from the Greeks to the Romans in the person of Charlemagne”.¹⁴ Examples can easily be uncovered, not only from humanist historiography,¹⁵ but also from other types of sources, ranging from humanist poetry to diplomatic acts.¹⁶

While Italian chronicles of the period maintain the older idea of *translatio imperii* from the Greeks to Charlemagne, many humanist historiographers seem to have accepted the status of the Eastern Empire as a remnant of the Roman Empire.¹⁷ The *imperium* was regarded as a transferable principle of supreme authority that could move from one people to another. Within the league of the *imperium Romanum*—sometimes identified with the Fourth

22–24, 37–39; 62, ll. 9–10, 18–21; 63, ll. 37–39). Thereafter, he invariably called them *Graeci* (see n. 15).

- 14 “Stephanus, ultimo anno pontificatus sui, imperium a Graecis transtulit ad Romanos in persona Caroli Magni” (Filelfo, ed. Gualdo Rosa 1964–68: 162, ll. 16–18), citing Martin von Toppau’s *Chronicon pontificum et imperatorum*. In this passage, Filelfo dated the event to 752 (the last year of Stephanus II’s pontificate) but he was inconsistent in this respect, dating the *translatio* to Hadrianus I and Leo III elsewhere (Gualdo Rosa 1964–68: 122, n. 65). On the confusion about whom Charlemagne actually represented (Gauls? Germans? Romans?) in the medieval sources, see esp. Goetz (1958: 204–06).
- 15 Similar usages are found throughout humanist historiography. See, for example, Accolti (1544: fols. A4^v–A5^r, B6^r, C3^v, D3^v, E1^r–E5^r, F7^r, F8^r, K6^v, M5^v) for the period of the First Crusade, 1096–99; Bruni (ed. Hankins 2001: 280, §3.44, AD 1274) and Bruni (ed. Di Piero 1926: 455, AD 1438); Filelfo (ed. Gualdo Rosa 1964–68: 136, l. 10, ca. AD 1048; 162, l. 17, ca. AD 756); Foresti (1485: fols. 228^r, AD 752; 237^r, AD 886; 237^v, ca. AD 892; 242^v, AD 971; 243^v, AD 977; 249^r, AD 1006; 261^v, AD 1126; 262^r, AD 1130; 263^r, AD 1139–40; 372^r, AD 1202; 374^r, AD 1215; 377^r, AD 1260; 379^r, AD 1260); Palmieri (ed. Scaramella 1906: 74, ll. 5–7, AD 790; 86, ll. 10–12, AD 983; 89, l. 43–90, l. 3, AD 1053–56; 100, ll. 24–25, AD 1204; 106, ll. 35–37, AD 1274; 113, ll. 15–16, 37–39, AD 1330; 144, ll. 39–45, AD 1438; 145, ll. 31–40 and 169, ll. 32–33, AD 1453); Platina (ed. Gaida 1913: 179, l. 14, AD 1042; 179, ll. 29–30, AD 1076; 179, l. 36, AD 1014; 181, ll. 3–4, AD 1038; 185, ll. 23–25, AD 1056; 216, ll. 33–35, AD 1158); Sabellico 1535: 322b, 9th cent. AD; 326a, 9th cent. AD; 335a, ca. AD 963; 312a, ca. AD 800). Note that in Bembo’s Venetian history (ed. Ulery: 2007–09), the *Graeci* (or *equites Graeci*) specifically refer to stradiots fighting in the service of Italian lords.
- 16 In poetry, it seems, the alternative *Graii* was generally preferred. See, for example, Molza (ed. Scorsone and Sodano 1999: 194, no. 35, l. 1); Piccolomini (ed. Van Heck 1984: 450, l. 22; 474, l. 31; ed. Van Heck 1994: 2.92; cf. 2.49); Puscuro (ed. Elissen 1857: 2.421); Zovenzoni (ed. Ziliotto 1950: 2.11.37).
- 17 Goetz (1958: 237–57) discusses the views of, among others, Leonardo Bruni, Flavio Biondo, Platina, Sigonio, and Sabellico. But see also Pertusi (2004a: 19–20) who emphasises the persistence of the idea of *translatio imperii*.

Monarchy—the imperial ball had been passed from the Romans to the Greeks after the final dissolution of the Western Empire in the fifth century, and from there to the Gauls (with the coronation of Charlemagne) and to the Germans (with that of Otto the Great almost two centuries later). If an individual ruler acquired the *imperium Romanum* and obtained the title of Emperor of the Romans, this did not automatically mean that his subjects became identified as Romans. This explains why Italian humanists could regard the Byzantines as Greeks under a Roman emperor, especially as the Italians did generally not claim the political part of the Roman legacy.

The humanist denial of the Roman legacy to the Byzantines, then, implied a cultural rather than a political claim to ancient Rome. Italian humanists claimed Rome culturally rather than politically, imagined themselves to be the most rightful heirs to the ancient Romans, and prided themselves in having saved the cultural legacy of ancient Rome, which was Latin, not Greek. In the founding myths that they created for their cities and city-states, they often traced origins or foundational events to Roman times.¹⁸ They also created fantastic Roman genealogies for ruling families. Although their recuperation and renewal of Latin letters preserved a common European culture, Italian humanists saw it as ‘theirs’.¹⁹ During the fifteenth century, the idea that the Italians were the rightful cultural heirs to ancient Rome was cited and adopted, with different emphases, by such important humanists as Salutati, Bruni, Valla, and Sabellico.²⁰ From this cultural vantage point, it is easy to understand why Italian Latins were so reluctant to call Greek-speakers who inhabited (roughly speaking) the territories of the ancient Hellenes Romans.

The view that Byzantines were Greeks does not mean that Italian humanists were completely unaware of the Byzantines’ own claims to Romanness.²¹ In the exceptional case that they wrote in Greek, they could prove sensitive to the finesse of Byzantine naming. In his letters in Greek, for instance, Francesco Filelfo called the Byzantines Romans (Ῥωμαῖοι), even if he called their country

18 This is not exclusively characteristic of the humanists: Beneš (2011) has shown that also in the period between 1250 and 1350 intellectuals in Northern Italy created Roman pasts for their cities.

19 Pade (2012: 5–6). On the self-perception of the Italian humanists, see also Baker (2009).

20 For an overview of the role of humanist Latin in the formation of Italian identities, see Pade (2012).

21 For example, Sabellico observed that the Greeks called their prince “Emperor of the Romans” in their diplomatic acts and books and that they called the inhabitants of Constantinople *Romaei*: “[Graeci] suum principem Romanorum imperatorem suis diplomatibus et libellis inscriberent ipsique Constantinopolitani Romaei Graeca voce dicerentur” (Sabellico 1535: 275b).

Ἑλλάς (Hellas).²² He used the Roman label not only in the stock formula Αὐτοκράτωρ τῶν Ῥωμαίων (Emperor of the Romans),²³ but also to refer to the Byzantines, either collectively or individually. For example, when he wrote to Sultan Mehmet II in 1454 to ransom his mother-in-law, he admitted that “the sin of the Romans handed over Constantinople to your goodness so that the wrongdoers will learn their lesson”.²⁴ In another letter, he introduced one John Gauras as “a Roman by birth—from New Rome, I mean”.²⁵

Although at least some humanists were aware that the Byzantines called themselves Romans, they did not, however, invent a name for them that reflected this awareness in Latin. In his Latin correspondence, even Filelfo did not hesitate to refer to the Greeks (*Graeci*) when he meant the Romans of the East, without exception and without further qualification. At first glance, the formula *Imperator Romaeorum* might seem to retain the Roman implications of Byzantine self-presentation, yet it was a fossilised Latin loan translation of the official Greek title of the Byzantine emperor.²⁶ How fossilised the expression had become by the first half of the fifteenth century appears best in the Latin proceedings of the Council of Ferrara-Florence, where the Grecism *Romaei* is not used at all beyond the formula *Imperator Romaeorum*. In all

22 I examined Filelfo's 110 Greek letters together with the Greek poems in the edition of Émile Legrand (1892). The term ‘Romans’ is used by Filelfo with reference to the Byzantines (see Filelfo, ed. Legrand 1892: 41, 63, 73, 63), but also to the ancient Romans (see pp. 158, 176), while Λατῖνος is used to refer to contemporaneous users of the Latin language (see pp. 43, 189). ‘Hellas’ is used by Filelfo to denote Byzantium in a flattering letter to John Argyropoulos (Milan, 13 April 1441); he says that the Byzantine scholar plainly takes the first place among the wise men in Greece (see Filelfo, ed. Legrand 1892: 50). See also Filelfo's usage of ‘Hellas’ in the letter to Demetrios Sgouropoulos and his poem to Isidore of Kiev (p. 169, ll. 4–5; p. 209, ll. 13–28).

23 “τὰ περὶ τοῦ ἀρίστου ἡμῶν βασιλέως καὶ μεγίστου Ῥωμαίων αὐτοκράτορος” (Filelfo, ed. Legrand 1892: 41) (Milan, 19 October 1440).

24 “Ἡ γὰρ ἁμαρτία Ῥωμαίων παρέδωκε τῇ σῇ καλοκαγαθίᾳ τὴν Κωνσταντινούπολιν εἰς παιδείυσιν, οἶμαι, τῶν ἀδικούντων” (Filelfo, ed. Legrand 1892: 63–64) (Milan, 11 March 1454).

25 “Ἰωάννης ὁ Γαυρᾶς (...) τὸ μὲν γένος Ῥωμαῖος ἐστὶ κατὰ τὴν νέαν δηλονότι Ῥώμην” (Filelfo, ed. Legrand 1892: 73) (Milan, 23 October 1454). In view of the fact that Filelfo's addressee was Tommaso Franco (a Greek medic from Coron), the exegetic phrase “κατὰ τὴν νέαν δηλονότι Ῥώμην” may indicate that the Italian humanist felt that, for Greeks born outside New Rome, the Roman identification of Gauras was in need of clarification. On Franco, see Foffano (2000).

26 It also occurred in Latin translations of titles of other high officials of the Byzantine Empire. For example, in a letter of recommendation for the son of Loukas Notaras, dating to 6 January 1468, Notaras is called “tunc magnus dux Romaeorum” (cited in Philippides and Hanak 2011: 43).

other instances where the Byzantines are meant, the reference is to *Graeci*, not *Romaei*.²⁷

A particularly strong indication of this labelling bias towards the Romans of the East is the way Italian humanists rendered into Latin the name 'Ρωμαῖοι when they encountered it in Byzantine sources.²⁸ They had several options to translate the culturally sensitive word. They could choose to transliterate it into Latin (*Romaei*) as they did when they referred to the *Imperator Romaeorum*, or they could fully explicate its Roman import by using *Romani*. They could also, however, suppress Roman associations by turning the Romans into *Graeci*.²⁹ Although most Byzantine historians were translated into Latin later in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Raffaele Maffei's rendering of Procopius' history of the Persian Wars provides one of the early exceptions.³⁰ This translation is of peculiar interest here due to the brief introductory note, where Maffei explains why he translated 'Ρωμαῖοι with either *Romani* or *Romaei*:

I thought it necessary to warn that I distinguished Romaeans (*Romaei*) from Romans (*Romani*); by the former name the Greeks called the Romans and Latins before Constantine. Thereafter, however, insisting on their ancient possession of both name and empire [of the Romans], they demanded to be called Romaeans themselves. Hence, by these designations I denote not so much differences in names as distinct peoples.³¹

27 *Conciliorum* (ed. Alberigo and Dossetti 1973: 521, 523, 531, 561). We find "imperator Graecorum" on p. 517. The evidence can easily be augmented from other sources. In Italian discourse, this is also reflected in, for example, the Italian *Vite* of Vespasiano da Bisticci, where the Council is discussed at some length. Throughout his biographies, the word *romani* always refers to either the inhabitants of Rome, or the ancient Romans, but never to the Byzantines (who are called *greci*) (Bisticci, ed. Greco 1970–06: 5, 22, 39, 71, 67–68, 444, 530, 642, 688, 973, 975, 983, 984, 985). Also Guicciardini in his *Cose fiorentine* refers to the Byzantines as Greeks and never as Romans, even when he mentions them in conjunction with their Roman emperor (e.g., "lo imperadore e greci vennono in sulle galee del papa" in Guicciardini, ed. Ridolfi 1945: 263).

28 Pertusi (2004a: 13–20).

29 This was Leonardo Bruni's solution: Botley (2004: 38).

30 Pertusi (2004a: 6–20). Other early Latin translations of Byzantine authors are by Leonardo Bruni (Procopius, 1470) and Cristoforo Persona (Procopius, Agathias) in addition to translations into Italian by Niccolò Leonicensio of Vicenza (Procopius) and Benedetto Egio (Procopius).

31 "Monendum postremo censui quod a Romanis Romaeos diduxi quo Graeci vocabulo Romanos Latinosque ante Constantinum vocabant. Postea vero in antiqua nominis et Imperii possessione perversantes Romaeos se item dici contenderunt: quapropter non tam nominum potestates quam gentes his appellationibus discretas adnotavi" (Maffei

Maffei did not acknowledge the relation of identity between Italian Romans and Eastern Romans implied by the Greek word Ῥωμαῖοι as Procopius had originally used it. He moreover deconstructed this relationship by distinguishing the Romans and the Romaeans. For him, the *Romaei* were Greeks who had claimed the Roman name together with the Empire, but who were not really Romans. The Romaeans and Romans were entirely different peoples. A similar dissociation between Romaeans and Romans had been suggested by the usage of the Greek scholar Kanavoutzes. In his treatise on Dionysius of Halicarnassus' *Roman Antiquities* (ca. 1430–55), he uses both Ῥωμαῖοι and Ῥωμᾶνοι to distinguish between Romans of the East and Romans of the West, probably anticipating the cultural sensitivities of his Genoese lord Palamede Gattilusio.³² While Italian humanists discussed such matters occasionally, at the semantic level of naming in general, they did not voice any awareness of the Greco-Roman hybridity expressed by, for instance, Manuel Chrysoloras (discussed in Chapter 1, pp. 32–36).

Just as were the Byzantines in general, individual Byzantines were presented as *Graeci* if they were not identified by their birthplace. For example, Niccolò Capranica called Cardinal Bessarion a Trapezuntine and a Byzantine in his funeral oration for the cardinal, while an anonymous eulogist called him a Greek by nation (“greco di nazione”).³³ By the same token, Pietro Bembo referred to Constantine Lascaris as a man who outranked all *Graeci* living today.³⁴ No one ever styled them *Romani*.³⁵ There is perhaps one intriguing exception. In the Latin epitaph that Vergerio the Elder composed for

1509: fol. A1^r). See also, for instance, fols. Diii^v, E1^r, Fii^v, Giv^v, Iii^r, Iii^v, Iiiir^r, Ki^r, Kii^r, Liii^v, Niii^r, Nv^r.

32 Cf. Kaldellis (2007: 399–400). Kanavoutzes (*PLP* no. 10871) composed his treatise for Palamede Gattilusio between 1433 and 1455. It is available in the Teubner edition of M. Lehnerdt (1890). There are no full studies on him, but see Hinterberger (2002), Diller (1970), and S.G. Mercati (1927) in addition to Lehnerdt's introduction.

33 Capranica (ed. Mohler 1942: 407, l. 10) and Anon. (ed. Migne 1866: xcv). In his *Chronicon*, Foresti introduced several popes and rulers as Greeks by birth: Pope Saint Zosimus (Foresti 1485: fol. 197^v), Pope Leo I the Great (fol. 205^r), Eleutherius the Exarch (fol. 219^r), Pope Saint Zachary (fol. 227^r), Andronicus (fol. 249^r), and Emperor Michael VIII Palaeologus (fol. 279^r).

34 Cited in Donadi (1975: 127).

35 It has sometimes been assumed that Marullo's fellow poet Manilio Cabacio Rallo called himself “Manilius Romanus” in an edition of Paul the Deacon's epitome of Festus, published in 1475 in Rome (Lamers 2012a). However, it seems that the edition is misattributed to Rallo and should perhaps be attributed to Sebastiano Manilio Romano (Lamers 2013b).

Manuel Chrysoloras in 1415, the poet stated that the Byzantine professor was a “Constantinopolitan knight from the ancient stock of the Romans (*genus Romanorum*) who migrated with Emperor Constantine”.³⁶ Some have taken Vergerio’s claim literally.³⁷ Others supposed that Vergerio was mistaken since the Chrysoloras-family originated from the Greek islands and not from Rome.³⁸ The significant point about Vergerio’s epitaph is the fact that he ranked Chrysoloras among the Romans instead of the Greeks, probably because he was aware that the Byzantine scholar and diplomat was so proud of his Roman background.³⁹ Rather than a historical lapse on the part of Vergerio, this is an exceptional example of Italian recognition of a Byzantine as a Roman rather than a Greek—exceptional especially in the light of the otherwise sharp dividing lines between Greeks/Byzantines and Latins/Italians.⁴⁰

Byzantium had ceased to be a political and military threat to the Latin West, and after 1453 its ideological claims to the Roman legacy did not have to be taken seriously in what was now a dominant Italian context. The Italians could afford to host only ‘accommodating Byzantines’ who did not challenge their own claims to ancient Rome. The Byzantine intellectuals who had to make a living in the West had to accept that the ‘real’ Romans did not live in Byzantium, but in the Latin West. Unlike the Greekness of Plethon and Chalkokondyles, their Greekness was, in other words, also an assigned or imposed kind of Hellenism. They did not just invent their Greekness from within the Byzantine tradition, but rather accepted an assigned manner of being Greek and negotiated over its precise extent and meaning with their Italian hosts, sometimes openly challenging their hosts’ perception of who the Byzantines were.

The Greekness that the Latin humanists assigned to the Byzantines was, however, not only a denial of their Romanness, as it had been in the Middle

36 The Latin text is as follows: “miles | constantinopolita | nus ex vetusto | genere romano-
rum | qui cum consta | ntino imperatore | migrarunt” (Guarino, ed. Sabbadini 1915: 114,
ll. 77–79). Cf. the epitaph by Piccolomini (ed. Van Heck 1994: 53, no. 4, ll. 8–9): “Roma
meos genuit maiores; me bona tellus | Byzantina tulit, cinerem Constantia servat”. In the
title of this poem, Chrysoloras is called “Emmanuel Chrysoloras Graecus”. Piccolomini’s
epitaph for Chrysoloras is fashioned after Vergil’s: “Mantua me genuit, Calabri rapuere,
tenet nunc | Parthenope. Cecini pascua rura duces” (Donat. *Vit. Verg.* 36). Cf. Thorn-
Wickert (2006: 121–22).

37 So, for instance, Hody (1742: 12) and Schöll (1830: 502–03).

38 Thorn-Wickert (2006: 12–15, 120).

39 Cf. Guarino (ed. Sabbadini 1915: 63, ll. 16–20).

40 Similar interpretations in N. Zorzi (2002: 87–88, n. 2) with bibliography and esp. Maltezos
(2000: 533–34).

Ages. It also was a positive, appreciative label. Together with the Latin context in which they lived, this helps to explain why Byzantines embraced the Greek identifier the Latins applied to them and abandoned alternative strategies to bridge the gap with the Latin West, for example to stress the shared Roman heritage, as Manuel Kalekas had done when he addressed Iacopo Angeli (see Chapter 1, p. 34).

Greekness as Cultural Prestige and Distinction

Latin humanists infused the Greek designation with new and more positive cultural meanings that were bound up with their enthusiasm about Greek learning. Although Petrarch had had a predominantly negative view of the Greeks of his time, the generation of Guarino of Verona and Leonardo Bruni was philhellenic and deeply admired Manuel Chrysoloras in particular.⁴¹ This atmosphere of general enthusiasm surrounding Chrysoloras and his Greek studies is sometimes referred to as the *seconda grecità* of the first generation of Italian Hellenists, after the *prima grecità* of Boccaccio and Petrarch.⁴² When the Latins praised the Byzantines, they recognised that they were the principal carriers of the ancient Greek heritage. This is especially evident in the *Chrysolorina*, the unfinished literary monument in honour of Chrysoloras, produced by his former student Guarino of Verona long after the Byzantine's death.⁴³ In a letter that was probably intended as part of this collection, Guarino put Chrysoloras on a par with famous Greek teachers such as Plato, Aristotle, and Pythagoras.⁴⁴ Over the course of the century, and especially during its second half, Latin attitudes towards Greek scholars seem to have grown more critical (see below, p. 80). Even then, however, Greek scholars were often recognised as the principal carriers of Greek learning. Campano, for instance, praised his former teacher Demetrius Chalcondylas for the fact that he “seem[ed] to represent the illustrious and excellent wisdom, character, and elegance of the ancient Greeks”,⁴⁵ while Aldo Manuzio claimed that Chalcondylas “alone with [his]

41 Hankins (2003b: 332–33). For Petrarch's views on the Greeks in particular, see Bisaha (2004: 118–20).

42 For the difference between the *prima* and *seconda grecità*, see Hankins (2003b: 331–32).

43 For details on the collection, see Piacente (1999).

44 Guarino (ed. Sabbadini 1915: 63, ll. 44–45; 64 ll. 55–59; cf. 580, ll. 11–15).

45 In a letter of ca. 1450 Campano wrote about Chalcondylas: “Coepit me et quidem fideliter edocere; cuius disciplinis ob id quam maxime delector quod Graecus, quod Atticus, quod etiam Demetrius illustrem illam atque excellentem antiquorum Graecorum sapientiam,



ILLUSTRATION 3 *Tobias Stimmer, portrait of Demetrius Chalcondylas. From Paolo Giovio, Elogia virorum literis illustrium (Basle: Petrus Perna, 1577), p. 37. DFG-Projekt CAMENA, Heidelberg-Mannheim.*

wisdom represent[ed] for us [ancient Athens]”.⁴⁶ These are not the only examples. Poliziano asserted about Chalcondylas that he “would of course match [him] with absolutely any of the ancients”.⁴⁷ And in his satiric dialogue on the papal curia, Lapo da Castiglionchio the Younger remarked that, among

mores, elegantiam videtur effingere. Platonem, medius fidius, si hunc videas, magis tamen si audias, existimabis” (Campano, ed. Mencke 1707: 72).

46 In the preface to the Aldine edition of Euripides (1503): “Sed quoniam Athenae iamdiu nullae sunt, tecum, qui solus tua doctrina nobis illas repraesentas, hanc visum est deflere calamitatem” (Manuzio, ed. Legrand 1885: 81).

47 “...[Demetrio] communi praeceptore nostro, quem quidem audacter cum quovis veterum conmisserim” (Poliziano, ed. Butler 2006: 313, n. 7).

the Greek scholars visiting Italy, he felt as if he dwelled at Plato's Academy or Aristotle's Lyceum.⁴⁸

Generally, humanists were primarily interested in the ancient customs and mores of the Byzantine Greeks. Vespasiano da Bisticci famously observed that the Greeks who visited the Council of Florence in 1439 had not changed the style of their dress during the last fifteen hundred years or more. "This may still be seen", he continued, "in Greece in a place called the fields of Philippi, where are many records in marble in which are men clothed in the manner still used by the Greeks".⁴⁹ We find very similar observations in the diaries of Cyriac of Ancona, who travelled extensively in Greece, where he met Plethon and the young Chalkokondyles. Apart from ancient monuments and inscriptions, he also observed the 'ancient' customs of the population. When visiting the ruins of Amatheia in Epirus, he noted that some of the inhabitants of Dry had preserved ancient customs and manners of speech "for they say that their dead, no matter what their religion was, have gone off 'ἐς τὸν Ἄδην': to the lower world".⁵⁰ Such sparkles of antiquity roused the admiration of Italian humanists.

As Hellenes, or representatives of ancient Greek culture, Byzantines in Italy complicated the way in which Italian humanists normally responded to foreigners with pretensions to culture and learning. The humanists' appropriation of the Roman legacy went hand in hand with a strong feeling of superiority vis-à-vis peoples who lived outside the ancient Roman heartland. The classic expression of such humanist pride in ancient Rome is in Valla's *Elegantiae linguae Latinae* (1471). In his preface to that work, the humanist claimed that the Italians had lost the Roman Empire but had maintained their cultural *imperium*, since the French, Spanish, Germans, and many other nations of the world had accepted the dominance of the Latin language.⁵¹ Valla also explicitly rejected the idea that the ancient Greeks deserved highest praise for their cultural achievements. According to him, the Romans and not the Greeks had expelled barbarism and civilised the world: they had not only established a long-lasting world-empire, but more importantly had disseminated the Latin

48 Castiglionchio (ed. Celenza 1999: 152–53).

49 "Non passerò che io non dica qui una singulare loda de' Greci. I Greci, in anni mille cinquecento o più, non hanno mai mutato abito, quello medesimo abito avevano eglino in quello tempo, ch' eglino avevano nel tempo detto, come si vede ancora in Grecia nel luogo si chiama i campi Filippi, dove sono molte storie di marmo, drentovi uomini vestiti a la greca, nel modo erano allora" (Bisticci, ed. Greco 1970: 19).

50 Cyriac (ed. Bodnar 2003: 322, §46).

51 Valla (ed. Garin 1952: 596).

language throughout the world.⁵² As a consequence of this idea, Andrea Brenta, in his *In disciplinas et bonas artes* (1482), emphasised that all barbarian peoples in the world were indebted to the Latin language, an idea previously expressed by, among others, Poggio.⁵³ Just as Plato had been grateful that he was a Greek and not a barbarian, an Athenian and not from another Greek city, so Brenta's audience must rejoice in the fact that they were Italians, not barbarians, and Romans at that.⁵⁴ In order to distinguish themselves as the true heirs to Rome, Italian humanists thus revived the notion of the *barbari* that they saw applied to foreign peoples such as the Germans and Persians in their ancient Roman sources. However, their application of the notion of barbarism differed a great deal from ancient uses of the concept. While ancient authors had generally not addressed the *barbari* they ridiculed, Italian humanists entered into polemics with those "ignorant brutes [who were] supposed to understand insults in elegant Latin".⁵⁵ By addressing French and German humanists as *barbari*, they provoked them to take a stand and to defend their cultural honour against Italian chauvinism.⁵⁶

Obviously, the Greeks could hardly be reckoned among the *barbari*. They mastered a language even ancient Romans had cared to learn, and some Italians also adopted their language to write speeches and poetry. A Latin could regard it as an honour to be called a Hellene, and some of them called their Italian colleagues Greek or Attic to indicate their 'nativeness' in Greek.⁵⁷ In

52 Valla (ed. Garin 1952: 594–96). According to Valla (ed. Garin 1952: 596–98), the Greeks had failed to impose their language since Greek was ultimately unfit for universal use due to its dialectic diversity.

53 See his "Italorum laus" in *De vera nobilitate* (Bracciolini, ed. Canfora 2002: 10, ll. 24–28).

54 Brenta (ed. Campanelli 1995: 66–67, §§9–14). Cf. Pade (2012: 15–16).

55 Hirschi (2012: 143).

56 This aspect of the humanists' attitude towards foreigners is explained most lucidly in Hirschi (2012: 142–52).

57 The word *Graecus* is used with this meaning in a Latin translation of a Greek letter attributed to Poliziano (Poliziano, ed. Fabbri 2008: 28). See also the letter of Pico to Poliziano (ed. Butler 2006: 28), where Pico asserted that Poliziano's fluency in both Latin and Greek made it difficult to determine which language was his native language. It seems that *Atticus* could also be used to apply to a non-Greek in the context of language competence. I found an example of it in an elegiac epitaph for Ermolao Barbaro: "Barbarus Hermoleos atque Atticus atque Latinus | Hic iacet, hoc qui sit forsitan ipse roges. | Barbarus est gentis nomen, Latiumque et Athenas | Vtraque de tenebris eruta lingua dedit. | Romae obiit merito, priscis miscere suum qui | Nominibus nomen, dignus et ossa fuit" [*Barbarus Hermoleos, both Attic and Latin, reposes here, and you may perhaps ask who he is. Barbarus is his family name, and both languages, rescued from the shadows, gave him Latium and Athens. He aptly died in Rome, he who was worthy of mixing his name with ancient names,*

a letter to Giovanni Tortelli in 1449, Agostino Scannella reported that Niccolò Volpe (a student of Lianoro Lianori, former pupil of Gazes at Ferrara) taught Greek in order that his students, too, would become “Graeculi”.⁵⁸ Byzantine scholars also alluded to this notion. Just as, in the exceptional case of Manuel Chrysoloras, Vergerio had included him among the Romans, so Byzantine scholars, too, could exceptionally embrace Latins as if they were fellow Greeks by calling them Hellenes. Manuel Adramytenos, for example, wrote to Poliziano that he was “a perfect Hellene as regards [his] speech”,⁵⁹ while Gazes in a Latin letter (of 1472/3) praised Cristoforo Persona for his almost native knowledge of Greek.⁶⁰ Ianus Lascaris explicated the idea in a Greek epigram that was attached to the printed edition of Guarino Favorino’s Greek lexicon:

“τοιγὰρ ἐγὼν ἐποίειν καὶ ἀμείψομαι οἶα μ’ ἐρωτᾷς.

“Τίς; πόθεν; ἢ ἐ τίνων;” “Εἶπα τίνων· Μεδίκων.”

“Οἶδα τόδ’, ἀλλ’ Ἐλλήν;” “Ἐλλήν δοκέω.” “Φορέουσιν

ἡμεδαποὶ δ’ ἄλλοι.” “Ἀysonίων γονέων.”

and his bones with ancient bones] (BAV, Vat. Lat. 3353, fol. 49^r). Note the play with *Barbarus* the meaning of which (‘barbarian’) contrasts with Barbaro’s competence in the two languages of civilisation, and with the alternation of Latin and Greek name endings (-us and -os), reflecting Barbaro’s being both *Atticus* and *Latinus*.

- 58 “Velim scias nos omnes iocundos laetosque inter Latinas Cecropiasque Musas victitare: nam id litterarum Graecarum, quod praeceptor a te vel an alio didicit, nos id monet, id impartitur ut et Graeculi omnes esse possimus” (cited from Onorato 2008: 211). Apparently, “Graeculus” is used in this context without the usual negative connotations (see *NLW* s.v. “Graeculus 1” and Bianca 1997: 158–59).
- 59 “Ἐλλήν ἤδη τέλειος τὴν φωνὴν ὦν καὶ κομιδῇ Ἀττικὸς” [*being already an accomplished Hellene by speech and perfectly Attic*] (Filelfo, ed. Legrand 1892: 356–58, 4 July 1483). On Manuel Adramytenos, see Bianchi (1913), Amato (2010), and the entry of Domenico Musti in *DBI* s.v. “Adramitteno, Manuel” (with sources and a scholarly bibliography up to 1937) (cf. Hody 1742: 314–16).
- 60 Gazes (ed. Leone 1990: 79–80, esp. 79, ll. 3–13). This strategy was not confined to competence in Greek. For example, in his dedication of Homer’s *Iliad* (1504), Aldo Manuzio praised Girolamo Aleandro for his competence in both Greek and Hebrew: “tanta praeterea linguae volubilitate verba Graeca pronuntias, tantaque aptitudine et facilitate inspiras Hebraica, ac si mediis Athenis mediaque Israelitarum urbe, quo stabant tempore, natus et educatus esses” [*You moreover pronounce Greek words with such fluency of speech and the aspirates of Hebrew with such aptitude and facility that you seem to have been born in the heart of Athens or the city of the Israelites, in the time when these cities were in their prime*] (Manuzio, ed. Orlandi 1975: 82). Cf. Trapezuntius (ed. Monfasani 1984k: 386–87, §23).

“Πῶς Ἑλλήν;” “Πεδόθεν· τεκμαίρομαι Ἑλλαδικαῖσι
 σπουδαῖς· καὶ δ’ ἄλλως, εἴρεο Πυθαγόρην
 Εὐφόρβου ψυχὴν πῶς ἔλλαχεν· εἰ θέμις εἰπεῖν,
 ὥδε Βαρῖνος ἔφυν Γραικὸς ἐν Οἰνοτρίῳ.”⁶¹

“I am the author and I will respond to anything you ask”. “Who are you? Where are you from? To whom do you belong?” “I told you: the Medici”. “I know, but are you a Hellene?” “I think so”. “But our men wear different clothes”. “I stem from Ausonian parents”. “How can you be a Hellene then?” “From childhood on I proved it with my Greek studies. Otherwise, ask Pythagoras how he obtained Euphorbos’ soul. If it is allowed to say so, that is how I, Varino, became a Greek in [the body of] an Oenotrian”.

To be Greek, then, could be something desirable.⁶² It is significant that Byzantines often used the language of descent and kinship to characterise their own relationship to the ancient Hellenes. Michael Apostoles, for example, wrote that he and his fellows were the “children of the Hellenes” (“παῖδες Ἑλλήνων”) and followed in their footsteps (“οὐχ ἐτέρων”: and theirs only).⁶³ In the same vein, Markos Mousouros eulogised Demetrius Chalcondylas and Ianus Lascaris as “the autochthones (αὐτόχθονες) of most ancient Hellas” and claimed that they sprung from the same ancestors as the country’s primeval heroes.⁶⁴ The following chapters will show how Bessarion defined

61 I. Lascaris (ed. Meschini 1976: 65–66, no. 44, ll. 5–12, with pp. 155–58). The commentary of Kondoleon to this poem is available in BAV, Vat. gr. 1352, fol. 229^r–29^v. For Lascaris, see Chapter 5, p. 167, n. 4.

62 Latins called ‘Hellenes’ must be distinguished from philhellenes, or those favourable to the Greeks or the Greek case. In this sense, Theodore Gazes called both Pope Nicholas v and Leonello d’Este philhellenes, comparing the latter to Titus Quinctius Flamininus, the ancient Roman liberator of the Greeks (Gazes, ed. Mohler 1942: 262, ll. 11–12 and Gazes, ed. Leone 1990: 49–50, ll. 38–43 = Bessarion, ed. Mohler 1942c: 573, ll. 24–29).

63 “Ἡμεῖς φαμεν, θαυμασιώτατε ἄνθρωπε, παῖδες Ἑλλήνων εἶναι καυχώμενοι καὶ κεινὸν τοῖς ἔχουσιν, οὐχ ἐτέρων ἐπόμενοι. . .” (M. Apostoles, ed. Mohler 1942: 169, ll. 5–6). Also elsewhere in his *Ad Theodorum Gazae obiectiones*, Apostoles uses the term Ἑλληνες to refer to his learned contemporary Byzantines: “ἐκείνοι γὰρ εἰσιν οὗτοι, οἱ τῶν νῦν ὄντων Ἑλλήνων οὐ μόνον οἰονται σοφώτεροι γεγενῆσθαι, ἀλλὰ καὶ Σωκράτους αὐτοῦ καὶ Πυθαγόρου καὶ Πλάτωνος” (M. Apostoles, ed. Mohler 1942: 168, ll. 20–22). Compare the following formulation: “οὐδεὶς τῶν Ἑλλήνων, οὔτε τῶν παλαιότερων, οὔτε τῶν νεωτέρων” (M. Apostoles, ed. Mohler 1942: 168, ll. 35–36).

64 In the preface to the Aldine edition of Pausanias (1513): “Ἐπειτα δὲ καὶ οἱ περὶ Χαλκονδύλῃν καὶ σὲ, τοὺς αὐτόχθονας τῆς πρεσβυτέρας Ἑλλάδος καὶ τοῖς ὠκυγίοις ἐκείνοις ἥρωσιν ὁμοσπόρους, ἐπεχείρησαν ἡμεδαπὼν ἐντυπώσει βιβλίων” (Mousouros, ed. Legrand 1885d: 146).

the Hellenes in terms of descent, shared history and culture, and a common character (Chapter 3); how Ianus Lascaris predicated his argument in favour of Hellenism on the idea that Byzantines stemmed from the ancient Hellenes (Chapter 5); and how Giovanni Gemisto evoked his ancient kinsmen from Epidaurus, while also pointing to the ethnic ties between the ancient Greeks and other European peoples (Chapter 7). Apart from affirming and deepening their sense of communal belonging, their claims to kinship with the ancient Greeks also allowed them to distinguish themselves from Italian ‘Hellenes by training’ such as Guarino Favorino and Cristoforo Persona (see p. 76 above). This kinship ‘secured’ their claim to the Greek heritage. When the Ottoman Turks trampled their homes and dispersed them all over Europe, their Greekness bolstered their cultural prestige and sense of cultural superiority.

Moreover, it allowed them to make cultural and political claims with wider implications. In particular, they sought to capitalise on the common idea that the ancient Greeks were the glorious bringers of civilisation. By presenting themselves as the rightful heirs of the ancient Hellenes, they argued that the Latins were indebted to the ancient Greeks and thus to their heirs and offspring. For example, when Ianus Lascaris addressed the Florentines in a speech that will be discussed in Chapter 5, he recalled how Caesar had helped the Athenians because of their ancient ancestors, even though the Greeks of his time had fallen short of their more glorious ancestors. In the same way, Lascaris argued, the Byzantine Greeks now deserved the support of the Latins, notwithstanding the fact that they were “in the full sense pathetic remnants of the Greeks”.⁶⁵ This notion of ‘cultural debt’, fully exploited by Lascaris, often

65 “Si quis itaque vita defunctis alicubi sensus est, ut nationum consensu et sapientissimorum quorumcunque sententia autumare possumus, ac pro divinis et immortalibus meritis divinae gratiae immortalesque debentur, si nos Graecorum reliquiae, ut dixit Caesar Atheniensium populo, qui cum multa vivi delinquerent, propter mortuos servarentur, nos quoque, heu nimium vere Graecorum quisquilliae, mortuorum saltem causa bonum quodquam humanumve auxilium sperare possumus” [*If the deceased have any consciousness left somewhere (as we can assume on the basis of the common opinion among the peoples and the judgement of the very wise) and if an equally great gratitude is due to their superhuman and immortal merits, if we are “remnants of the Greeks” as Caesar said to the Athenians, who were spared because of their dead, although they, living Greeks, had done much wrong, then we, who are unfortunately in the full sense pathetic remnants of the Greeks, can expect good and human assistance because of our dead*] (I. Lascaris, ed. Meschini 1983: 91, ll. 35–41). In order to save the structure of the sentence, I deleted a colon after “si nos”, and assume an elided *sumus* after “reliquiae”, making “nos” the emphatic subject of *sumus* and considering “Graecorum reliquiae” the nominal part of the predicate instead of an apposition with “nos”.

underpinned direct claims for financial, cultural, and military assistance (see Chapter 3, pp. 120–23 and Chapter 5, pp. 175–76). The Byzantines' 'possession' of the Greek heritage was, to use a term from sociology, a form of cultural capital. As with all forms of capital, however, it was contested.

Conflicting Claims: *Translatio Studiorum* and Cultural Ownership

The enthusiasm for Greek studies among Latin humanists and the Byzantines' concern for the Greek heritage may lead all too easily to the conclusion that Greeks and Latins were involved in the same kind of cultural project. Latin humanists and Byzantine scholars certainly shared some interests, but their views on the role of the Greek heritage in Latin culture could differ substantially. Latin humanists generally saw the Byzantines in their capacity as teachers of Greek letters and regarded their activities as part of a cultural transfer or *translatio studiorum* from East to West, from Byzantium to Italy—a process that seemed increasingly irreversible after 1453. For them, moreover, Greek studies was subservient to the study of Latin literature and Roman history. The utility of Greek for Latin studies (from Latin orthography to Roman history) was a *topos* of humanist discourse about Greek studies from the time of Manuel Chrysoloras onwards. It explains why Byzantine scholars could be praised for restoring Latin literature: Chrysoloras was praised as having restored the Latin language, while Gazes was regarded as an ornament to both Latin and Greek (“nobile linguarum decus duarum”).⁶⁶

One extreme consequence of the idea that Greek learning served Latinity was a tendency to reduce the use of Greek studies to the ways it might serve Latin. Even an accomplished Hellenist such as Filelfo stressed that the Latins “did not take so much pains to learn Greek literature in order to use this knowledge among the Athenians or the Byzantines but with the purpose of acquiring, with its support and command, a more perfect and more splendid mastery of Latin literature and eloquence.”⁶⁷ According to Paolo Giovio, Giovanni Pontano, too, found that humanists should be “diligent scholars of Greek to the degree that it adds clarity and beauty to our Latin studies, and not to Hellenise

66 “Longa itaque desuetudine infuscatus ante Latinus sermo et inquinata dictio Chrysolorinis fuerit pharmacis expurganda et admoto lumine illustranda” (Guarino, ed. Sabbadini 1916: 583, ll. 68–70). The epitaph for Gazes by Giano Pannonio is cited after Hody (1742: 99).

67 “Non enim eo Graecas litteras tantopere omnes discere studemus quo iis apud Athenienses Byzantiosve utamur, sed ut illarum subsidio atque ductu latinam litteraturam atque eloquentiam melius teneamus et lautius” (Filelfo 1496: fol. cvii^r).

on every occasion as if we were Athenians, appearing to seek from it personal glory”.⁶⁸ From this reductive perspective, humanists regarded the Byzantines as instrumental to their Latin project. While Byzantines tried to save ‘their’ literary heritage (see below, pp. 82–86), some Latins claimed that Hellenism had been virtually transplanted to Italy: Gazes was said to have united Hellas and Latium, and Ianus Lascaris brought (“detulit”) Athens to Latium.⁶⁹ Seeing the accumulation of Greek manuscripts at the court of Pope Nicholas V (1447–50), Filelfo declared that Greece had not perished but had migrated (“commigrasse”) to Italy.⁷⁰

If even before 1453 Byzantium had been deemed increasingly less capable of safeguarding the Greek heritage,⁷¹ the fall of Constantinople in 1453 and the concomitant influx of Greek books and scholars further fuelled the idea that the process of cultural transfer was completed. With numerous talented humanists eager to read Greek classics in the original, it was, moreover, only a matter of time before the first non-Greek Hellenists would arrive at intellectual stardom. Although teachers such as Manuel Chrysoloras had drunk directly from the source, later Byzantine Greeks, often largely if not wholly educated in Italy, did not have this ‘native’ advantage. Especially in the second half of the century, this situation began to encroach upon the authority of Greek scholars: humanists sometimes even questioned their pronunciation of Greek.⁷² This had the paradoxical effect that, although probably more accomplished Greek scholars lived and worked in Italy since the time of Emperor Augustus, their influence declined together with their cultural prestige.⁷³

Angelo Poliziano, the influential Hellenist of the second half of the Quattrocento, went so far as to publicly denounce the necessity of Greek

68 “Ego enim Graeca, ut Pontanus dicere solebat, quatenus et lucem et ornamenta Latinis afferent studiis sedulo perdiscenda arbitror, non ut ab his peculiarem laudem ubique Graecissantes tamquam Athenis nati petere videamur...” (Giovio, ed. Gouwens 2013: 244). Translation by Kenneth Gouwens.

69 The epitaph for Lascaris is in Molza (ed. Scorsone and Sodano 1999: 194, no. 35, ll. 3–4). The epitaph for Gazes by Giano Pannonio is cited after Hody (1742: 99).

70 “Nam innumerabilia prope volumina, ingenti etiam pretio, advecta sunt in Italiam. Itaque iure optimo dici potest non periisse Graeciam, sed in Italiam, quae olim Magna Graecia dicta est, unius eius Nicolai pontificis clementia commigrasse” [*An almost innumerable and immensely valuable amount of books has been shipped to Italy. Therefore it is perfectly fair to say that Greece has not perished at all but moved to Italy (that was once called Magna Graecia) thanks to the generosity of Pope Nicholas*] (Filelfo 1502: fol. 92^r).

71 Ciccolella (2008: 121).

72 Nuti (2012: 121).

73 Förstel (1992: 72).

scholars in the *translatio studiorum*. His famous lecture on the *expositio* of Homer, originally delivered in 1486, starts with an astonishing confirmation of Latin cultural autonomy that would have been hardly possible in Salutati's Florence. After emphasising his own accomplishments in Greek studies as a boy, Poliziano continues by addressing his Florentine audience:

And you are the people, Florentines, in whose city all Greek learning—since long extinct in Greece itself—has come to live again and flourishes so greatly that your men now already teach Greek literature in public, and (something that has not happened in Italy for a thousand years) boys of high nobility speak the Attic language so soundly and so easily and fluently that it would seem that Athens had not already been destroyed and occupied by barbarians but had spontaneously pulled itself apart from its very soil and immigrated to Florence with its entire household, so to say, and spread completely over the entire city.⁷⁴

Poliziano here presents it as if Greek learning had moved from Athens to Florence spontaneously (note the emphatic “*ipsae sua sponte*” in the Latin text) and without the intermittence and mediation of Byzantine scholars. This assertion was an outright provocation of Byzantine Greeks in Italy and in particular his rivals in Florence: Demetrius Chalcondylas, Michele Marullo, and Ianus Lascaris who, all in their own ways, sought to establish themselves as guardians and transmitters of the Hellenic tradition in Italy.⁷⁵

As teachers and masters of Greek, the Byzantines had been welcome to support the Latins in their quest for Greek learning but as rivals for posts at Italian courts, schools, and universities they could become a threat to the interests of Italian scholars. As some Latin humanists (such as Poliziano) became independent of Greek teachers, they were increasingly less prepared to rely on the support of the Byzantine Greeks. Like Poliziano, they probably felt that

74 “Et vos hi estis, florentini viri, quorum in civitate Graeca omnis eruditio, iampridem in ipsa Graecia extincta, sic revixerit adque effloruerit ut et vestri iam homines Graecam publice literaturam profiteantur, et primae nobilitatis pueri, id quod mille retro annis in Italia contigit numquam, ita sincere Attico sermone, ita facile expediteque loquantur ut non deletae iam Athenae adque a barbaris occupatae, sed ipsae sua sponte cum proprio avulsae solo cumque omni, ut sic dixerim, sua supellectile in Florentinam urbem immigrasse eique se totas penitusque infudisse videantur” (Poliziano, ed. Maïer and Del Lungo 1971: 477; ed. Megna 2007: 4, ll. 3–12).

75 On other occasions, however, Poliziano praised Byzantines for their Greek (and incidentally, Latin) learning. For his attitude towards the Greeks, see also p. 73 above, Chapter 5, pp. 167–68 and 185–87, and Chapter 6, p. 204.

they had ‘taken over’ Greek studies. This attitude may represent a more openly critical *terza grecità* that replaced, in the second half of the century, the enthusiasm of the *seconda grecità* of the first generation of Italian Hellenists such as Guarino of Verona and Leonardo Bruni (see p. 72 above).

The idea of a *translatio studiorum*, together with a strong sense of Latin chauvinism and personal careerism, sat uneasily with Byzantine viewpoints on their role in the Byzantine diaspora. Byzantine scholars, too, saw themselves as the carriers of Greek language and learning, but for them this meant something different. Their attitude can be illustrated by citing a letter of Nikolaos Sekoundinos to Andronikos Kontovlakas,⁷⁶ written not too long after the fall of Constantinople:

Thanks at least to you it is possible to see that some remnants of this beautiful Hellas still exist and that children of the Hellenes are still imitating their fathers and so safeguard this divine beauty of our language, which for me is the most lovely and the most worthy of all. Therefore, it occurs to me to parody (and perhaps appropriately) this small piece of Homer. Homer made Agamemnon say to Nestor, and I say, *mutatis mutandis*: if I should only have ten Theodoroi or ten Andronikoi, that would suffice not to conquer the small and barbarian town of Ilion, but to preserve the language and the learning of the once wisest and most civilised people of all peoples, the method and power of speech, and every sort of knowledge now shipwrecked.⁷⁷

76 For Sekoundinos, see above p. 18, n. 61. For Kontovlakas, see below p. 88, n. 96.

77 “Ἔστι γὰρ ὁρῶν ἕνεκά γε σοῦ ἔτι λείψανα τῆς καλῆς περιόντα Ἑλλάδος καὶ παῖδας Ἑλλήνων τοὺς πατέρας ἀπομιμουμένους, τό γε θεῖον ἐκεῖνο τῆς ἐρασμιωτάτης ἐμοὶ καὶ πάντων τιμιωτάτης φωνῆς διασώζοντας κάλλος. Τῷ τοι ὁμηρικὸν ἐκεῖνο παρωδῆσαι μικρὸν ἔπεισέ μοι καὶ ἴσως κατὰ καιρὸν. Ὁμηρος μὲν γὰρ Ἀγαμέμνονα τῷ Νέστορι φάναι ἐποίησεν, ἐγὼ δ’ ἐναλλάξας φημί· Εἴ μοι δέκα μόνοι Θεόδωροι ἢ δέκα Ἀνδρόνικοι γένοιντο, ἐξαρκέσαι ἂν οὐ τὸ Ἴλιον πολίχινόν τι βάρβαρον ἐκπορθῆσαι, ἀλλὰ γένους πάντων γενῶν σφωτάτου ποτὲ καὶ ἡμερωτάτου φωνὴν καὶ παιδείαν, μεθόδους τε καὶ λόγων [καὶ] ἰσχὺν, πᾶσάν τ’ ἐπιστήμης ἰδέαν ναυαγῆσασαν φεῦ! ἀνασώσασθαι” (Sekoundinos, ed. Boissonade 1833: 386 with notes 2, 4, and 5).

In my display of the Greek text, I relied on the text-critical remarks of Boissonade. Τῷ τοι *scripsi**: Τῷ τοι *ms*: *utrum delendam an mutandam?* Boissonade | ἐξαρκέσαι ἂν *scripsi*: ἐξαρκέσαι *ms*: ἐξαρκέσαιεν ἂν? Boissonade | [καὶ] ἰσχὺν *scripsi*: καὶ ἰσχὺν *ms*: *delendum καὶ ante ἰσχὺν*, *ni perierit nonnihil, verbi causa, ἔξιν, φορὰν· φορὰν λ. καὶ ἰσχὺν Boissonade*.

Even though in classical Greek literature “τῷ τοι” occurs only three times in Plato (see *Resp.* 409b4, *Soph.* 230b1, *Thet.* 179e1), later Byzantine authors such as Choniates and Pachymeres adopted it and began to use it more often. In his *Grammatica*, Scholarios defined “τῷ τοι” (spelled this way as one word) as “διὰ τοῦτο” (‘therefore’) (Scholarios, ed. Jugie et al. 1936: 491, ll. 7–8) (cf. *Etym. Gudianum*, s.v. “τῷ τοι”: “οἱ ποιηταὶ ἀντὶ τοῦ τότε”).

This passage can be read as a blueprint of how the Byzantine intelligentsia saw their role in the diaspora. Calling the Greek scholars in the diaspora “remnants” of Hellas and “children” of the Hellenes, Sekoundinos presented them as the custodians of a supreme heritage, to which they were the natural heirs but which was also on the verge of complete obliteration. The idea that the Greek heritage had to be cherished was not new: the importance of saving Greek literature for the benefit of the Hellenes had been emphasised by Manuel Chrysoloras in his address on the nation, written for the emperor in 1410. As Greek literature naturally moved towards imitating the glorious deeds of the past, the cultivation of Greek learning was pivotal to the survival of Byzantium. According to Chrysoloras, the Byzantines therefore needed a strong cultural elite capable of virtuously guiding them towards better times.⁷⁸ After the fall of Constantinople, the preservation of Greek learning became an even more urgent task. While some cited Roman colonisation as a cause for the cultural decline of the Hellenes, all agreed that the impact of the fall of Constantinople and the subsequent Turkocracy were truly disastrous to the continuity of Hellenism. Attempts to save the Hellenic heritage culminated in the library of Cardinal Bessarion (see pp. 84–85 below). Transforming the original Homeric language of military expansion into the language of cultural survival, Sekoundinos in his letter to Kontovlakas transferred Hellenic heroism from the battlefield to the library, from the realm of political exploits to the domain of cultural conservation: it was the only kind of heroism the Byzantine intelligentsia in Italy could lay claim to.⁷⁹ In Chapter 3, we shall see that a similar transferral from the political to the cultural was behind Bessarion’s account of Hellenic heroism to protect Hellenic freedom.

For Greeks in Italy, this ‘defence’ of the Greek heritage—their involvement in collecting, copying, and promoting Greek literature and learning—was a thoroughly patriotic commitment.⁸⁰ Regarding one of the manuscripts he copied, for example, Michael Souliardos claimed that he had copied the ancient

To avoid misunderstanding, and for reasons of historical synchrony, I adopted Scholarios’ spelling.

78 Nuti (2012: 120–21).

79 Boissonade placed everything between “εἰ μοι” and “φεῖ! ἀνασώσασθαι” (see n. 77) between quotation marks. However, Sekoundinos did not really cite lines from Homer here. In fact, his words are only very loosely inspired by *Il.* 2.370–74, where Agamemnon, in response to Nestor, expresses the wish that if he “only had ten such counselors among the Achaeans, then would the city of king Priam immediately bow its head”. Interestingly, the same Homeric passage was parodied in a similar context in a letter of Poliziano to E. Barbaro (Poliziano, ed. Butler 2006: 34).

80 See also Nuti (2012) for a useful overview of the idea of cultural preservation in the work of Manuel Chrysoloras, Demetrios Kydones, Theodore Gazes, and Demetrius Chalcondylas.

Greek orators not for his own profit, but for the sake of his fatherland.⁸¹ At a much larger scale, Cardinal Bessarion's impressive collection of Greek manuscripts (donated to Venice in 1468) was inspired by patriotic motives: the preservation of the Hellenic patrimony. After the fall of Constantinople, the cardinal began collecting Greek manuscripts and commissioning Greek scribes to copy them. He voiced his reasons for building this collection in a much-cited letter to an acquaintance (probably Michael Apostoles). According to Bessarion, his collection was an attempt to avoid the present-day Hellenes from "remaining entirely voiceless and differing in nothing from barbarians and slaves through losing the few present monuments in addition to the many and beautiful monuments of those divine men we have already lost a long time ago."⁸² He regarded his Greek library as a fixed and safe site of collective memory for the present and future Hellenes; as a site where they could find or rediscover their language and literature in order to reproduce it.⁸³ It is perhaps not surprising

81 "ἐν Φλωρεντίᾳ [ἐξέγραψα] οὐ χάριν δώρων, ἀλλ' ὑπὲρ πατρίδος" [*In Florence [I copied this] not for my own profit but for the sake of my fatherland*] (cited from Vogel and Gardthausen 1909: 319, with reference to BAM, Cod. Ambr. 26 [A 99 sup.]).

82 The letter was probably addressed to Michael Apostoles: "Εμοὶ δ' ἔτι τῶν τε θύραθεν τῶν τε καθ' ἡμᾶς διδασκάλων ἔλλειπει οὐκ ὀλίγα συγγράμματα. Ἰσταμένης μὲν οὖν τῆς κοινῆς Ἑλληνῶν καὶ μόνῃς ἐστίας οὐκ ἐφρόντιζον, πάντα εἰδὼς ἐκεῖ ἀποκειμένα· πεσοῦσης δέ, φεῦ, μεγάλη τις ἐγένετο ἐπιθυμία τῆς πάντων αὐτῶν κτήσεως, οὐκ ἐμοῦ γε ἕνεκα, ὅς γε τῆς ἰδίας ἕνεκα ὠφελείας ἀρκοῦντα κέκτημαι, ἀλλ' ὥς ἂν εἴ που νῦν τέ τινες λειφθεῖεν Ἑλληνες, εἴ τέ τι εἰς ἔπειτα βέλτιον πράξαιεν—πολλὰ δ' ἐν τῷ μακρῷ χρόνῳ γένοιτ' ἂν (cf. Hdt. 1.32.2)—, ἔχοιεν ὅπῃ τὴν αὐτῶν φωνὴν ἄπασαν, τὴν γε νῦν οὔσαν, ἐν τινι ὁμοῦ ἀποκειμένην ἀσφαλεῖ τόπῳ εὖροιεν καὶ εὐρόντες πολλαπλασιάσαιεν καὶ μὴ πρὸς οἷς πολλοῖς τε καὶ καλοῖς τῶν θείων ἐκείνων ἀνδρῶν πάλαι ἀπολωλέκαμεν ὑπομνήμασι καὶ τὰ ὀλίγα ταῦτα νῦν ἀπολέσαντες ἄφωνοι τὸ πάμπαν μένοιεν καὶ βαρβάρων τε καὶ ἀνδραπόδων οὐδὲν διαφέροιεν" [*As long as the common unique centre of the Hellenes was still in existence, I was not worried, knowing that everything was stored there. After it fell, alas, an enormous desire occupied me to possess all of these manuscripts, not for my own sake as I possessed enough of them for my own use, but so that, in case some Hellenes would somewhere remain now and would fare better in the future (many things can come to pass over a long period of time), they would know where to find their entire language that now exists, remaining together at a safe place, and, after its rediscovery, they would reproduce it. Also I wanted to possess all manuscripts lest they would lose, apart from the many and beautiful writings of those divine men we have already lost a long time ago, also their few present works and so stay behind entirely voiceless and differ in nothing from barbarians and slaves*] (Bessarion, ed. Mohler 1942c: 479, ll. 10–21).

83 Kourniakos (2013: 458): "Durch seine Handschriften kartographierte Bessarion eine kulturelle, aus antiken Andenken bestehende Heimat, die die geographische ersetzte". Compare Bessarion's letter to Theodore Gazes (1453/4), where he also explained his plan to collect manuscripts (Bessarion, ed. Mohler 1942c: 486, ll. 4–29). The formation and content of Bessarion's Greek library and his donation to Venice are discussed by, among

that Bessarion's letter has led modern scholars to refer to his collection as a "national library".⁸⁴ The later generation of Byzantine scholars in Italy—for example, Ianus Lascaris and the even younger Markos Mousouros—continued to promote the Greek heritage in Bessarion's spirit,⁸⁵ while the project to save a sense of Greekness by saving the Greek heritage was also subtly criticised by Manilio Cabacio Rallo (see Chapter 6, pp. 230–32).

As Byzantines identified with the ancient Hellenes, they also recognised the rift in time and place that separated them from their glorious ancestors. This is reflected in Sekoundinos' words "remnants of the Hellenes" ("τὰ λείψανα τῶν Ἑλλήνων"): a paradigmatic phrase also used by Michael Apostoles and Cardinal Bessarion and adopted by Latins such as Donato Acciaiuoli, who described the Byzantine scholars together as "vestiges of ancient Greece".⁸⁶ Their philological pursuits to reconstruct Greek antiquity can be seen as an attempt to bridge this gap and to recover their ancestral culture. With Gazes' own explanation of the decline of the Attic calendar in mind (discussed in Chapter 1, pp. 58–61), his *De mensibus* does not solely present an illustrative example of a humanist's sophisticated interest in ancient Greek chronology. It also reflects a means of reviving, and returning to, the customs of the Hellenic ancestors, which the Byzantine intelligentsia saw as their ancestral legacy. The same holds true for Ianus Lascaris' reconstruction of the ancient Greek characters which he set out in his dedicatory letter to the *editio princeps* of the Greek Anthology (1494), printed in the restored Greek majuscules he believed to be the "most ancient and truly authentic form" of Greek writing.⁸⁷ At the basis of Lascaris' restoration was the idea that the ancient Hellenes originally used a uniform set of characters that had degenerated over the course of time, as an increasing number of people began to adapt the letters to their own use (a process Lascaris

others, Zorzi (2002, 2003), Mioni (1994), Labowsky (1979a), and Leporace and Mioni (1968). For his own scribal activities, see also Mioni (1967) and J.T. Papademetriou (1970). Bessarion's Latin library is discussed most extensively by Monfasani (2011b).

84 "National library" (N. Zorzi 2002: 55) and "Nationalbibliothek" (Irmischer 1976: 183). Cf. Kourniakos (2013: 458) who cites Bessarion's library is to illuminate Assmann's (2000) definition of cultural memory. The next Chapter will show how Bessarion's library project fitted in with his ideas about freedom that according to him characterised the Hellenes throughout their history.

85 See here Pardos (1998).

86 BNC, Magl. VIII 1390, fol. 89^v, cited after Bisaha (2004: 125, with n. 161; cf. p. 124, with n. 158).

87 "...ut illam potissimum formam eligerim... quae vetustissima et inprimis vera esse videretur" (I. Lascaris, ed. Pontani 1992: 201, ll. 68–71. The Latin text is also available in Botfield (1861: 185–92). A. Pontani (1992b) discusses Lascaris' text in the context of Greek handwriting and typography in the early Renaissance.

described in terms of corruption and degeneration).⁸⁸ He believed that the original set of characters used by the earliest Hellenes could be restored through an attentive review of the ancient testimonies.⁸⁹

The way in which the Byzantine intelligentsia saw its role in the diaspora sat uneasily with the general humanist idea that Greek learning was principally subservient or even inferior to Latin culture. While superficially Byzantine and Latin scholars shared a project to revive antiquity, the cultural assumptions behind their projects were very different. These differences are also behind the cultural misunderstandings that haunted Greeks and Latins in Italy and produced new arenas of conflict and tension that replaced the traditional religious and political quarrels between them.

The Burden of Being Greek

Notwithstanding the fact that many Italian humanists valued ancient Greek learning, they were not by definition well-disposed towards the *Graeci* who transmitted it to them. Italians who admired Greek learning and were themselves composers of epigrams in ancient Greek fashion could at the same time express deep and bitter contempt for contemporary Greeks, including their Greek teachers. When Theodore Gazes was elected *rector* of the arts students of the University of Ferrara in 1448, he delivered a speech accepting his new post in which he attacked those who had vainly opposed his election. According to him, if a Greek was in competition for a position, some people would “contend even against the Greek nation, as if Greeks were barbarians and alien to the Latin people rather than the ancestors, teachers, and benefactors of the entire Italian nation”.⁹⁰

88 I. Lascaris (ed. Pontani 1992: 201, l. 61–203, l. 113).

89 I. Lascaris (ed. Pontani 1992: 200, l. 30; 201, ll. 51, 62; 203, ll. 109–10). Even if Greek inscriptions were known to Lascaris’ contemporaries, the Byzantine scholar preferred to use literary evidence to underpin his *instauratio*, on which see A. Pontani (1992b: 105–14). Pontani was able to show that Lascaris’ majuscules are not the ancient characters he had possibly seen during his travels to the East but a restyling of a type of majuscule already attested in epigraphic and calligraphic writing in Italy (A. Pontani 1992b: 117–37).

90 “Nonnulli adeo contentioso, invido, perversoque animo sunt, ut si forte is, qui ad magistratum gerendum eligendus proponitur, Graecus sit, de Graeca et natione contenderent, quasi Graeci barbari quidam essent et a genere Latinorum alieni, non maiores, praeceptores fautoresque totius Italicae nationis. Vos recte Romanos, maiores vestros, homines humanissimos, e vestigio sequentes, Graecos homines vobis coniunctissimos esse religionis, morum, artium omniumque rerum similitudine putatis” (Gazes, ed. Mohler 1942:

Despite friendly contacts between Greeks and Latins, a general Latin bias against Greeks remained and Latins often used traditional anti-Greek stereotypes to discredit their Greek rivals or critics.⁹¹ Especially strong was the notion (also recalled by Gazes in his speech) that the Greeks were an alien people who had nothing in common with the Latins and whose language and mores would pose a danger to the integrity of Latin culture. This idea was by no means confined to the fiercest of opponents of Greek studies. It seems that there was a common anxiety about the influence of Greek studies on Latin culture. Some Latins were, according to their critics, too infatuated with Greek literature and had to reassert their Latinity, which had been 'affected' by Greek studies. One of the most famous 'Hellenising' Latins, Francesco Filelfo, was repeatedly accused of excessive Greekness. Already in 1427, he had to defend himself against suspicions of Grecomania. A friend had feared that, due to Filelfo's extended visits to Greece, the Hellenist would have become a Greek himself. In response, Filelfo reassured his correspondent that he had brought nothing from Greece except for books and learning and asserted that he was a Latin and had always been so ("et sum Latinus et fui semper") (see also Chapter 5, pp. 194–95).⁹²

Apart from the idea that the Greeks were strangers, with the resultant sense of cultural unease, there was an anti-Greek sentiment that could result in stereotyping or stigmatising. Suspicions of heterodoxy lingered on. Moreover, anti-Greek bias came to the fore in the so-called *lotte*. These 'battles' between Greeks and Latins normally emerged from the fact that Latin scholars felt offended as soon as Greek colleagues challenged Latin authorities.⁹³ In exceptional cases, Latins would indeed praise Greeks for their achievements in Latin. Umbro Vitalino, for instance, wrote about Theodore Gazes that he was

261–62, § 6). Thorn-Wickert (2006: 51–54) suggests that in 1400 Manuel Chrysoloras stopped lecturing in Florence due to such ethnic discrimination as signalled by Gazes.

91 Although Italians used long-standing stereotypes for the Greeks, the period under scrutiny predates the systematisation of stereotyping in the later sixteenth and seventeenth centuries that is particularly visible in neo-Aristotelian poetical writing in the wake of Scaliger, most notably in De La Mesnardière's *Poétique* of 1642 (Leerssen 2000: 272).

92 Filelfo (1502: fol. 1^v). On this sense of cultural unease with special reference to the case of Francesco Filelfo, see Lamers (forthcoming).

93 The term *lotte* was introduced to the discussion by Sabbadini (1885: 81–88). According to him, these 'battles' originated in the fact that the Italians were, and felt themselves to be, primarily Latins. The best-known such 'battle' between Byzantine and Italian humanists was between Argyropoulos and Poliziano, for which see Chapter 5, pp. 185–87. For the *lotta* between George Trapezuntius and Andrea Agaso (whom Trapezuntius believed to be Guarino of Verona), see Monfasani (1976: 29–32) and Chapter 4, pp. 140–44.

not only a “prince” of the Greek language, but even “vicit Ausoniam”.⁹⁴ This was, however, rather exceptional. Due to Latin cultural chauvinism, it was generally not acceptable for Greek scholars to intervene in ‘Latin affairs’ by, for instance, criticising a Latin author. Pietro Bravi,⁹⁵ for example, rebuked Andronikos Kontovlakas because he had offended Latin honour.⁹⁶ Calling him a “Latini nominis impugnator”, Bravi claimed that the “nature of the Greeks” (“natura Graecorum”) was naturally inclined towards maligning their “Latin princes and masters”.⁹⁷ In his invective (which reads like a catalogue of anti-Greek stereotypes), he accused Kontovlakas of arrogance, heterodoxy, perfidy, drunkenness, intemperance, garrulousness, loquacity, and perversity, and stressed that Kontovlakas’ recklessness was “inborn”, as it was to all Greeks.⁹⁸

94 “Nec solum Graiae princeps fuit iste loquentiae. | Quid magis miratur: vicit et Ausoniam” [*And he was not only the prince of Greek speech. What is more surprising: he even subdued Italy*] (BNC, Magl. VII 1195, fol. 118^r). Compare the way Cabacio Rallo was praised as a Latin poet (see Chapter 6, p. 204).

95 Pietro Bravi (Bravus) remains an obscure figure. Apart from being a scribe of Greek manuscripts (Gamillscheg, Harlfinger, and Hunger 1981: 345; Bernardinello 1979: 20, 48, 49) and a composer of Italian verse (Maier 1965: 426), he was also a public notary and secretary in Padua, as it appears from a document drafted by him on 20 November 1477 and published in Bottaro (2003: 187–89, 188 *fin.*) (cf. Gualdo 1979: 234 for another official document composed by Bravi).

96 The Latin text is available in Bravi (ed. Hankins 2003). On Kontovlakas, see mainly Monfasani (1990a). Hankins (1995: 131, 203) assumed that Bravi’s “quidam Graeculus Andronicus” was Andronikos Kallistos. I believe, however, that Bravi’s Andronicus must be identified with Andronikos Kontovlakas. According to Bravi’s account, Andronikos had been incarcerated (Bravi, ed. Hankins 2003: 417, l. 19), while Kallistos was not jailed. Andronikos Kontovlakas, on the other hand, mentioned his own incarceration in Brescia in his *Dialogus invectivus* (Kontovlakas, ed. Monfasani 1990: 319). In the short dialogue, he also asserted that the Brescians had tortured him and left him “semivivus” (pp. 318–19). This is consistent with Bravi’s account that Andronikos had been flogged so badly that he fell ill (p. 417, ll. 19–20). Whether or not Bravi responded to Kontovlakas’ *Dialogus* is difficult to know, but it seems very likely that the addressee of his invective was Kontovlakas and not Kallistos. Cf. Monfasani (2011c: 182, n. 3).

97 Bravi (ed. Hankins 2003: 417, ll. 1–14).

98 “Scimus inconstantiam, scimus intemperantiam et ebrietatem tuam, nec nos fugit quam detestando morbo illo labores, quo et ceteri Graeci. Ἀνδρόνικος quidem tibi nomen est, a cuius nominis etymologia tua penitus abhorret natura. Id enim (ut nosti) hominum victor Latine sonat. Melius autem significantius tibi Παιδόνικος affuisset. Tu enim pueros potius quam homines vincere solitus es” (Bravi, ed. Hankins 2003: 417, ll. 3–12). Note that at the end of his letter (p. 419, ll. 81–84), Bravi changed his tune and emphasised that his words were not aimed at *all* Greeks but only at those *of the kind of* Andronikos.

Adding another stereotype to his extensive list, Bravi additionally played on the etymology of his adversary's name:

We know your fickleness, we know your lack of self-control and your drunkenness, and it does not escape our attention how much you suffer from this detestable disease from which all Greeks suffer equally. Indeed your name is 'Andronikos' (Ἀνδρόνικος), but your nature is in complete disaccord with the etymology of that name. In Latin it means (as you know) 'victor of men'. However, a far better and more significant name for you would have been 'Paidonikos' (Παιδόνικος). For you usually subdue boys rather than men.⁹⁹

In this *lotta* and in other contexts, Latin depreciations of individual Greeks must be seen as part of a more general anti-Greek bias in Latin humanism: individual Greeks were typically discredited by the vices of their group or *natio*, as Gazes also signalled in the speech cited above. Bravi's conversion of salient features into representative *propria* (known as the 'typicality effect') is a recurring strategy in the way Italian humanists loaded their Byzantine colleagues with stereotypes.¹⁰⁰

The *lotta* between Bravi and Kontovlakas is also one of many examples showing that Greeks had to reckon with Latin anti-Greek sensibilities. Even so, Byzantine scholars did not conceal that, in their view, Greek literature was superior to Latin, and sometimes expressed outright contempt for Latin culture. According to Michael Apostoles, for instance, Greeks were superior to the Italians even if they were a shadow of their former self or "the remnants of the Hellenes" ("τὰ λείψανα τῶν Ἑλλήνων").¹⁰¹ While Europe had Cicero and Vergil, according to Apostoles Athens alone had produced more philosophers than Italy could ever bring forth.¹⁰² The ancient Hellenes, and not the Romans, had been at the origin of civilisation, as they had invented the "beauty of letters of philosophy itself". Moreover, even though the Italians were now in their prime, they did not teach Greek in Greece, while the Hellenes, laid low by fortune,

99 Bravi (ed. Hankins 2003: 418, ll. 66–72).

100 On the so-called 'typicality-effect' see Leerssen (2000: 283–84) and Leerssen (1997).

101 "οὐχ ὑπεκσταίητ' ἄν τοῖς Ἑώοις, τὸ κάλλος εὐροῦσι τῶν λόγων καὶ τὴν φιλοσοφίαν αὐτήν;" (Apostoles, ed. Laourdas 1949: 243, ll. 10–11). For a discussion of this text, see Geanakoplos (1958).

102 M. Apostoles (ed. Laourdas 1949: 243, ll. 19–24). According to Apostoles, the ancient Easterners were superior to the ancient Europeans in all fields of knowledge: philosophy, historiography, oratory, poetry, theology, and grammar (p. 243, ll. 11–19).

did teach Latin in Italy. Hence, even in decline, the Hellenes were superior to the Latins in their prime.¹⁰³ Although Apostoles' view may count as extreme in its anti-Latin overtones, decidedly pro-Latin Byzantines such as Cardinal Bessarion and Lascaris also maintained their sense of cultural superiority. Such Greek cultural chauvinism naturally conflicted with the ever more pronounced cultural self-awareness of the Latins.¹⁰⁴ Although Byzantine Greeks did not directly reply to Latin arguments for Roman superiority or Greek inferiority, they insisted that Greek culture was older and that the Romans had generally freely borrowed from the Greeks.

Even though, as foreigners, Byzantine Greeks held a special position in the cosmos of Latin humanism, their Greekness was not straightforward. It seems that anti-Greek bias grew stronger in the course of the fifteenth century. Especially after Byzantium had ceased to exist, the Byzantines' social status was reduced from that of high-ranking diplomats or invited scholars (as Chrysoloras and, to a certain extent, Bessarion had been) to that of highly cultured but homeless dependents who had to make a living by offering their decreasingly precious knowledge of Greek. In conjunction with Latin chauvinism and cultural anxiety about the assumed influence of Greek learning, personal rivalries and professional competition also fuelled anti-Greek sentiments among Italian humanists.

Unlike some thirteenth-century *Rhomaioi*, Byzantine Greeks in Italy did not present themselves as Hellenes in order to explain to themselves and the Latins what kind of Romans they were. Unlike Plethon's ideas on who the Byzantines were, their Greekness was moreover not *radical*: they did not design it to subvert dominant perceptions. The Hellenism of the Byzantine intelligentsia was rather a *negotiated* form of Greekness, in the sense that it accommodated both Latin perceptions of who the Byzantines were and Byzantine attempts to create a sense of cultural distinctiveness. As Greeks in Italy, they continuously teetered between social and cultural acceptance and rejection. Even when, in their roles as teachers, copyists, translators, and editors, the Byzantine Greeks catered to the cultural and intellectual concerns of the Latins, their Greekness implied much more than a "service identity" as we find in the self-presentation of some of the Byzantine intellectuals who remained in the Greek-speaking

103 Apostoles (ed. Laourdas 1949: 243, ll. 24–35). For an English translation of the passage, see Geanakoplos (1958: 160–61).

104 See here Bianca (2013: 5–7).

East.¹⁰⁵ They were, in other words, not just mimicking Latin points of view when they adopted the ideas of Greekness the Latin West had traditionally assigned to them. If there is a common threat in the case studies that follow this chapter, it is precisely that, in many instances, Byzantine scholars fired back at the Latins some implications of their views of the Byzantines. Moreover, they did so in various ways. Although their identification with the Hellenes might suggest that they held a uniform view on what it meant to be Greek, the following case studies also show that their individual opinions and emphases could vary as widely as the ways they used the ancient Greek past to present themselves and their group.

105 For the notion of service identity in relation to these authors, see Kaldellis (2014: 15).

Freedom and Community: The Secular Greekness of Cardinal Bessarion

Nil tandem superest nobis de gente Pelasga
 Cum mors abstulerit Bessariona patrem.
 Huic dum vita fuit, tibi adhuc sperare licebat:
 Nunc spes, infelix Graecia, nulla tibi est.¹

Nothing of the Pelasgian people is left for us since death has taken away Father Bessarion. As long as he was alive, there was still hope for you. But now, miserable Greece, no hope is left for you.

This poem by Leonardo Montagna on the death of Bessarion aptly epitomises the cardinal's position in the Greek diaspora: from the moment he settled in Rome in 1439 until his death in 1472, he not only acted as the protector of many Greek refugees in Italy but also exerted himself to preserve the Greek legacy and to liberate Greece from the Ottoman Turks. Bessarion's total identification with Greece and the fate of the Greeks in this poem shows his preeminent role in the diaspora as much as it obscures the complexities of his Greekness. Bessarion's wide-ranging body of work in both Greek and Latin (professional and personal letters, poetry, political pamphlets, various kinds of oratory, and philosophical and theological treatises) provides more insight into his views on what it meant to be a Hellene than the extant works of any other Byzantine intellectual in Italy. As his extant works were, uniquely, written in Greece and in Italy for both a Greek and a Latin audience, it shows how Bessarion, in various capacities, variously shaped his Greekness in the neo-Roman worlds of Trebizond and Byzantium as well as Renaissance Rome.

This chapter attempts to do two things. First of all, it fleshes out Bessarion's Hellenism on the basis of what he himself has to say about it, especially in his *Encomium to Trebizond*, but also in his memorandum for Constantine Palaeologus. Scholars have often emphasised the fact that in Rome the cardinal

1 Montagna (ed. Sanzotta 2010: 42–43).

retained his Byzantine Greekness in his beard and austere Basilian dress.² Others, on the other hand, have denied a Greek identity to Bessarion, mainly because he left the Byzantine Church for Rome.³ There has been insufficient attention paid to what Bessarion himself had to say about his Hellenism. He traced his own ancestry back to ancient Athens and regarded the Hellenes as a noble people with a shared ancestry, heritage, and character that transcended contemporary political and religious boundaries. Bessarion's sense of contiguity with the ancient Hellenes also informed his understanding of his own role vis-à-vis his fellow Hellenes. Writing after his teacher Plethon sent off his political treatises about the Peloponnesus and before Chalkokondyles wrote his revisionist history of the Hellenes, Bessarion carved out his own position in the discussion of who the Byzantines were. Although the eulogy to Trebizond was probably written shortly before he settled in Rome, it prefigures themes that resurface in later works and give the cardinal's later efforts for the Hellenes in Italy a coherence that has as yet gone unnoticed in the scholarship.

Secondly, this chapter reveals the tension between Bessarion's secular role as a Hellene in the Greek diaspora and as a Roman cardinal in Christendom and how these roles were intertwined. While the first part of the chapter discusses texts in Greek and largely for Greeks, the second takes into account Bessarion's Latin works intended for a Latin audience. In particular, it looks closely at the cardinal's dissimulation of Greekness in the *Orationes contra Turcas*. The *Orationes* have been cited to indicate Bessarion's passionate Greek patriotism, and it seems that even the Parisian editor of the text, Guillaume Fichet, interpreted them this way.⁴ Fichet attached an epigram to the copy made for Frederick III, in which he voiced his hope that, via Bessarion, Greece would rouse the emperor into arms. Like Montagna in his epitaph, Fichet identifies the cardinal with Greece:

2 Harris (1999: 199; 2000a: 39–40). For portraits of Bessarion, see Bianca (2000), Labowsky (1994), and Lollini (1994).

3 See, for instance, Zisis (1980: 215, 218) who refused to call the Roman cardinal a Hellene in his discussion of Bessarion's epitaph (for which see below, p. 115, n. 80). Along the same lines, Tomadakis (1953: 62) claimed that if Bessarion had succeeded in his plan to recover Greece, "we [i.e. the contemporary Greeks] would be neither Greeks nor Orthodox Christians" (my translation from the Greek). For an earlier evaluation, see Kalogeras (1893).

4 For example, "tanto lo animava la difesa della fede cristiana e la salvezza della Grecia, sua patria e patria spirituale di tutti, e dell'Europa cristiana" (Coccia 1989: 226), and "[the] *Orationes*, proceeding from this premise of the central role of Greece in Christian spiritual and political life, exhorted the princes of Italy and Western Europe to join together in a crusade for its reconquest" (Feld 1988: 28). On the speeches in particular, see Meserve (2003) and Coccia (1989).

Quos citat in Turchos acri Bessario cornu,
 Caesar et audentes sumite tela viri.
 Graecia vos moneat diro prostrata tyranno,
 Excitet et Christi iam prope lapsa fides.⁵

You whom Bessarion rouses with his sharp horn against the Turks, you, Caesar and all those men who dare, take up arms! May Greece, overthrown by a harsh tyrant, admonish you, and may Christ's faith, now close to falling into decay, rouse you into arms.

If we look closely at Bessarion's *Orationes*, however, their most eye-catching feature is precisely the absence of a *Greek* Bessarion, arguing for the *Greek* case. In the second part of the chapter, I will discuss and try to explain Bessarion's dissimulation of Greekness against the background of how other Byzantines addressed the issue of Greek liberation, focussing especially on a speech delivered at the court of Charles v by Ianus Lascaris.

Ethnic Roots and Cultural Imitation in Bessarion's *Encomium to Trebizond*

Bessarion is one of the most fascinating figures of the Byzantine diaspora, who flourished between the twilight of Byzantium and the rising stars of the Italian Renaissance.⁶ For almost his entire life he dwelled among the most powerful people of the Greek-speaking world and the Italian peninsula; he spent his youth in Trebizond, Constantinople, and Mistra and travelled through Europe both before and after his permanent settlement in Rome in 1439. Dramatic changes pervade his biography. He was believed to be born to modest parents

⁵ Cited from Legrand (1903: 16).

⁶ Bibliography on Bessarion is extensive. A recent overview is Lusini, Rigo, and Pugliese Carratelli (2001: 204–27) but see also the bibliographies in Märkl, Kaiser, and Ricklin (2013). A first overview of his life and works is Lotte Labowsky's entry in *DBI* s.v. "Bessarione" (with sources and scholarly bibliography up to 1966; cf. Jonathan Harris' entry in *EGHT* s.v. "Bessarion" and Claudia Rapp's in *CT* s.v. "Bessarion of Nicaea"). On his life in Rome in particular, see Capizzi (1997). Book-length studies on various aspects of Bessarion's life and works are Goethe (1871), Vast (1878b), Rocholl (1904), Mohler (1923–42), Kyrou (1947), Parthenios (1957), Mioni (1991), Fiaccadori, Cuna, and Ricci (1994), Lusini, Rigo, and Pugliese Carratelli (2001), Coluccia (2009), Monfasani (2011b), and Märkl, Kaiser, and Ricklin (2013). Further references are in the footnotes to this chapter.

in Trebizond between 1399 and 1410 (the later dates seem now most likely) and died as a wealthy and powerful person in Rome in 1472.⁷ After his education in Constantinople under Chortasmenos and Chrysokokkes, where he studied with Francesco Filelfo, Bessarion moved to Mistra (1431–36), where he continued his education at the school of Plethon.⁸ Notwithstanding his enduring devotion to the controversial philosopher, he climbed the ladder of success in the Church, initially the Greek, later the Roman.⁹ After the disillusionment of the Council of Florence (1439), he did not stay in Byzantium for long, but returned to Florence. Having received his red hat and the title of cardinal deacon of the Church of the Holy Twelve Apostles, Bessarion moved to Rome, where he managed to maintain his position at the Curia under six successive popes (1440–72). The pontificate of Pius II (1458–64) had brought him to the apex of his prestige as the leading cardinal of the College when, in 1463, he succeeded to the Latin Patriarchate of Constantinople with the see of Negroponte.¹⁰ As a Roman cardinal, he remained in touch with the Greek-speaking world, especially with his mentor Plethon and with the imperial family, and he also addressed the Greeks collectively in an encyclical letter of 1463.¹¹ Bessarion's preoccupation with the Greek-speaking world—both before and after the fall of Byzantium—originated, as he himself repeatedly explained, in his strong sense of connection with the community of the Hellenes.

The most important document we have to understand Bessarion's sense of affinity with the Hellenes is his *Encomium to Trebizond*, which has not been

7 The idea that Bessarion came from humble parents was suggested by M. Apostoles (ed. Migne 1866: CXXXI). It has, however, been criticised by Braccini (2006), arguing that Bessarion was the son of the nobleman Konstantinos Milessios. A useful discussion of his disputed year of birth is in Tambrun-Krasker (2013: 8–9). The important dates of Bessarion's biography are in M. Zorzi (1994: 1–8). For the location of Trebizond, see p. 242, maps 2 and 3.

8 Bessarion's education in Constantinople and Mistra is discussed in detail in Tambrun-Krasker (2013: 7–28) and Mondrain (2013: 198–99).

9 For Bessarion's career in the Church of Rome, see most recently Henderson (2013: 92–101, with a helpful list of benefices on pp. 114–17).

10 Henderson (2013: 96–7).

11 Cf. Ronchey (2002). Bessarion's connections with the imperial family remained close after the fall of the empire. In a letter to the community of Siena (1472), Bessarion (ed. Mohler 1942c: 564) wrote that it has always been his concern to look after the descendants of the Greek emperors ("principes Graeciae reliquiae"). Bessarion also advised the pedagogue of the children of Thomas Palaeologus after they had arrived in Rome; his letter to their educator (1465) is available in Mohler (1942: 531–36).

taken into full account in discussions of the cardinal's Hellenism. Bessarion addressed his speech to the citizens (“ἄνδρες πολῖτας”) of his native city. If the text was actually delivered or sent to Trebizond, its most likely aim was to encourage the Trapezuntines to protect their freedom in the face of the increasing Ottoman presence.¹² The date of the text's composition is disputed, but it was most probably written before Bessarion settled in Italy.¹³ Whatever the original context and purpose of the text may have been, Bessarion included the *Encomium* among his collected early works in Marc. Gr. 533, which he probably wanted to see published or translated into Latin.¹⁴ Moreover, the ideas about Hellenic freedom voiced in the text illuminate his activities in support of Hellenism during his cardinalship in Rome.

The Empire of Trebizond had been cut off from the dominions ruled from Constantinople since shortly before the sack of the imperial city by the Latins in 1204. During the Latin empire (1204–61), Trebizond existed side by side with the successor states of Epirus and Thessaloniki. While these successor states, as well as the Peloponnesus, eventually became part of the restored Roman Empire of the Palaeologi, Trebizond remained independent under the Comnenian dynasty until as late as 1461, when it was incorporated into the Ottoman Empire. The Comneni probably released their claim to the throne of Constantinople at the end of the thirteenth century, but did not abandon their claim to the title “Emperor of all the East, the Iberians, and the Transmarine Provinces”.¹⁵ Despite the imperial pretensions of its ruling house, however, Bessarion placed his native city in civic Greek rather than imperial Roman history, called its inhabitants Hellenes instead of Romans, and dissociated Trapezuntine history from both Rome and Constantinople.

12 Lampsides (1984a: 9).

13 Bessarion (ed. Lambros 1916: 194, ll. 25–26 = Lampsides 1984a: 72, ll. 3–4). The text's date of composition most probably falls between 1436 (Lampsides 1955) and 1440 (Akışık 2011), but Lauritzen (2011: 154–55) maintains that it was composed in the period 1426–29. On Bessarion's eulogy in particular, see the series of articles by Lampsides (1935, 1955, 1970, 1982a, 1982b, 1984a, 1984b). On Bessarion's usage of Libanius in the speech, see Fatouros (1999: 198–204). The only more detailed studies of the text are Lauritzen (2011) and Akışık (2011). When I was writing this Chapter, I was not aware of Akışık's work on this text, and it was encouraging to find in it some general correspondences with my own argument. See now also Kaldellis (2014: 194–96).

14 See here esp. Saffrey (1964), Gasparrini Leporace and Mioni (1968) 3–6, and Rigo (1994) 34–36. On the generally understudied Greek poems in this manuscript as well as their context, see in particular Ronchey (1994).

15 Miller (1969: 29).

In order to forge a meaningful link between Trebizond and ancient Hellas, Bessarion evoked a sense of continuity with the remote past in two different but interrelated ways. He emphasised, first, that the contemporary Hellenes were ethnically related to the ancient Greeks and, secondly, that they had preserved important original features through cultural imitation or “μίμησις” of their ancestors. In particular, he argued that the Trapezuntines descended from the Athenians. Echoing Pericles’ *Funeral Oration*, he wrote that “the Attic city of the Athenians is [Trebizond’s] first beginning and metropolis, Athens, the rearer of the Hellenes, the mother of literature, the teacher of this most beautiful language”.¹⁶ In addition, Bessarion made the point that the Trapezuntines had carefully conserved Athenian Hellenism even among the Asian barbarians in whose vicinity they lived. In so doing, he implicitly rebuked the claim of Heraclides Ponticus that, of all Hellenic tribes, “the great multitude of the Ionians had changed due to the fact that it lived together with the barbarians who always ruled over them”, cited in Athenaeus’ *Deipnosophistae*, the only complete copy of which Bessarion would later donate to the library of Venice (now BNM, Marc. Gr. 447).¹⁷

To prove his first claim of ethnic kinship, Bessarion relied on the traditional link of the Ionians with Athenians, distinguishing them from the Dorian Greeks.¹⁸ He found Greek historiography on his side to show that there existed a direct connection of kinship between the Trapezuntines and the Athenians. He argued that Trebizond was a colony of Sinope, which was a colony of Miletus, which was a colony of Athens. He probably scraped together bits of evidence for this argument from several ancient Greek authorities: Herodotus claimed

16 “Αὕτη [i.e. Τραπεζοῦς] πρώτην τοῦ γένους ἀρχὴν καὶ μητρόπολιν, εἰ δεῖ τὰ πρεσβύτερα πρότερα λέγειν, ἀττικὴν καὶ τὴν Ἀθηναίων αὐχεῖ πόλιν, τὴν τροφὸν τῶν Ἑλλήνων, τὴν μητέρα τῶν λόγων, τῆς καλλίστης ταύτης φωνῆς τὴν διδάσκαλον. Ἀπώκισαν μὲν γὰρ αὐτὴν Σινωπεῖς, τοὺς δ’ αὖ, οἰκισθέντες ὑπ’ Ἀθηναίων, Μιλήσιοι, τὰ κράτιστα τῆς Ἀσίας, τὸ πρόσχημα τῶν Ἰώνων, οἱ τῆς παραλίου ταύτης Ἑλλάδος ἡγούμενοι, οὐκ ἄλκιμοι μόνον γεγενημένοι πάλοι ποτέ, τοῦτο δὴ τὸ λεγόμενον, ἀλλὰ καὶ μεθ’ ὑπερβολῆς ὅσης ἂν εἴποις” [*If it is necessary to name the oldest things first, this city [Trebizond] boasts that the Attic city of the Athenians is her first beginning and metropolis, the rearer of the Hellenes, the mother of literature, the teacher of this most beautiful language. The people of Sinope colonised it, whom the Milesians, colonised by the Athenians, had in turn colonised—the Milesians, the ornament of the Ionians, those who led this Hellas by the sea and long ago were not just powerful, as they say, but you might even say that they were pre-eminently powerful*] (Bessarion, ed. Lambros 1916: 150, ll. 4–11 = ed. Lampsides 1984: 24, ll. 7–14). Cf. Thuc. 2.41.1.

17 “Ἰώνων δὲ τὸ πολὺ πλεῖστος ἡλλοίωται διὰ τὸ συμπεριφέρεσθαι τοῖς αἰεὶ δυναστεύουσιν αὐτοῖς τῶν βαρβάρων” (Ath. *Deipn.* 14.19.10–12).

18 A. Powell (1988: 10, 44).

that Miletus was founded by the son of the Attic king Codrus; Xenophon noted that Miletus established Sinope; and Eusebius remarked that the Sinopeans colonised Trebizond three years before the founding of Rome in 756 BC.¹⁹ If Bessarion's father was Konstantinos Milessios, as Tommaso Braccini has argued, this would connect him even more closely to the Athenians personally: the Milessioi traced their origins to the founders of Sinope.²⁰

Bessarion's second argument for the uninterrupted cultural relationship between Athens and Trebizond was more complex. In order to demonstrate the continuity between the two cities, Bessarion more than once stressed that the inhabitants of the Euxine city had always carefully preserved the cultural heritage of their ancestors. This meant the rejection of barbarism and the continuous defence of freedom in the face of foreign domination. Even though both the Sinopeans and the Trapezuntines lived among the barbarians in Asia, Bessarion claimed, they had always ignored them and even ridiculed those who feared them.²¹ According to Bessarion, the Hellenic nature of the Trapezuntines and their ancestors most clearly appeared in their continuous resistance to barbarian tyranny. In his appraisal of the Milesians in particular, he underscored their defence of liberty, alluding to the Ionian Revolt (499 BC),²² and praised Milesian courage ("ἀνδρεία") and magnificence ("μεγαλοπρέπεια") together with their prudence and wisdom ("φρόνησις καὶ σοφία"). According to Bessarion, these qualities made their city "worthy of Athens".²³ Via the Milesian colony Sinope, he further argued, Trebizond had taken over the

19 See here Hdt. 9.97; Xen. *An.* 6.1.15 (cf. Strabo 12.3.11); Eus. *Chron.* 1.80e Schoene. It must be noted that for all towns alternative foundation myths circulated. Michael Psellos, too, voiced the idea that Trebizond was a Hellenic city (Lampsides 1984a: 18, n. 1).

20 See here Braccini (2006).

21 "... Ἕλληνες δὲ καὶ οἱ ἀπὸ Μιλήτου πεμφθέντες, Λυδῶν οὐκ ἐπιστρεφόμενοι..." (Bessarion, ed. Lambros 1916: 155, ll. 4–5 = Lampsides 1984: 29, ll. 11–12); "... οὐδὲν δ' ἐπιστρεφόμενους αὐτῶν [sc. βαρβάρων]..." (p. 168, l. 12 = p. 42, ll. 21–22); "... ταῦτ' οὖν παρ' οὐδὲν ἔπειθον τὴν βαρβαρικὴν ὁμότητα τίθεσθαι καὶ διαπτύειν τὰς ἀπειλὰς καὶ δεδιττομένων καταγελᾶν..." (p. 170, ll. 1–13 = p. 44, ll. 12–24).

22 "... Ἕλληνες δὲ μόνοι καὶ μάλιστα Ἴωνες καὶ τούτων αὐθις τὰ κράτιστα Μίλητος ἀπρίξ τε τῆς ἐλευθερίας ἀντεῖχοντο καὶ οὐδὲν ὅπερ οὐκ ἄσμενοι ὑπὲρ ταύτης ἡρουντο" [*Only the Hellenes and especially the Ionians and the flower of them, Miletus, tightly clung to freedom, and they would eagerly do anything to support it*] (Bessarion, ed. Lambros 1916: 151, ll. 11–16 = Lampsides 1984: 25, ll. 16–18).

23 Bessarion (ed. Lambros 1916: 152, ll. 13–24 = ed. Lampsides 1984: 26, ll. 19–29). Elsewhere, Bessarion (ed. Lambros 1916: 153, ll. 22 = Lampsides 1984: 27, l. 31) stressed that Miletus was in no way inferior to Athens ("οὐσα καὶ σφόδρα τῶν Ἀθηνῶν ἐπαξία").

“Hellenic spirit” of Athens, and perfected it.²⁴ After his description of the landscape of his native city, and the hilly uplands that gave it a natural defence, Bessarion claimed that in the city “the Hellenic people lived alone among the barbarians, while they continued to use the language of the Hellenes, honoured freedom, and sought after equality of rights (ισονομία).”²⁵ At a time when the numerically superior Persians subdued all the surrounding peoples in Asia, the Trapezuntine Hellenes remained upright. The best synopsis of the idea is in the following key passage, which is worth quoting in full:

Although they had only recently been living together with them [the barbarians], probably being not very many in number, and also weak in power, they still showed immediately from the start that they were Hellenes, a people without master, unenslaved, and uniquely free both spiritually and physically; they imitated their forebears, the Sinopeans, the Milesians, and earlier still the Athenians. We know what answers they [i.e. the Athenians] gave when the barbarians attacked them and that they continuously exhibited invaluable works. Of the others [i.e. the Milesians and Sinopeans] we know that they lived among the very barbarians and neglected them. They on the contrary acted against the despots of the inhabited world in defence of freedom as far as possible and participated in the equality of rights common to them. They did not dismiss a bit of their dignified and noble character, nor did they exhibit anything unworthy of their ancestors and Hellenic honour. Instead, as if they had been sent out on their expedition as shareholders, not of their land, but rather of their virtue, they continued to refer to themselves and their ancestors as a standard in every respect. And setting themselves an example and model, they continued to be the natural enemies of the barbarians and irreconcilable with them, greatly differing in language and mind, and generally having nothing in common with them.²⁶

24 Bessarion (ed. Lambros 1916: 155, ll. 22–29 = ed. Lampsides 1984: 29, l. 30–30, l. 5).

25 Bessarion (ed. Lambros 1916: 167, ll. 35–36 = ed. Lampsides 1984: 42, ll. 9–11).

26 “Ἄρτι γοῦν συνωκισμένοι καὶ οἷα εἰκὸς τὸν τε ἀριθμὸν ὄντες οὐ πᾶν πολλοὶ καὶ τὴν ἰσχὺν ἀσθενεῖς, ὅμως εὐθύς ἐξ ἀρχῆς ἔδειξαν Ἕλληνας ὄντες, γένος ἀδέσποτον καὶ ἀδοῦλτον καὶ μόνον ἐλεύθερον τὴν τε ψυχὴν τὰ τε σώματα, Σινωπεῖς τε καὶ Μιλησίους καὶ ἔτι πρότερον Ἀθηναίους τοὺς σφῶν πατέρας μιμούμενοι, τοὺς μὲν οἷας ἴσμεν ἀποκρίσεις ἐπιόντων αὐτοῖς τῶν βαρβάρων ἀποκεκριμένους ἔργα τε διὰ πάντων ἐπιδειξαμένους τίνος οὐκ ἄξια, τοὺς δ’ ἐν μέσοις μὲν τοῖς βαρβάροις οἰκοῦντας, οὐδὲν δ’ ἐπιστρεφομένους αὐτῶν, ἀλλ’ ἐς ὅσον ἐξῆν ὑπὲρ ἐλευθερίας τοῖς τῆς οἰκουμένης δεσπόταις ἀνταίρωντας καὶ μετέχοντας ἰσοπολιτείας αὐτοῖς. οὐδὲν οὐ τοῦ φρονήματος, οὐ τοῦ τῆς ψυχῆς ἐφεΐσαν ἐμβριθοῦς καὶ γενναίου, οὐδ’ ἀνάξιον οὐδὲν τῶν προγόνων καὶ τῆς Ἑλληνικῆς ἐπεδείξαντο δόξης, ἀλλ’ ὥσπερ οὐ γῆς μάλλον ἢ τῆς ἐκείνων ἐκπεμφθέντες

This passage shows in a nutshell that, for Bessarion, the history of the Trapezuntines was inextricably part of the Herodotean struggle between Hellenism and barbarism. In their insulated city, as Bessarion presents it, the Trapezuntines confidently perpetuated the spirit of their Athenian ancestors through their continuous resistance to barbarian despots and their defence of Greek freedom, an ideological tenet of the classical Greek city-state rather than the Roman Empire. Genealogical lineage and the imitation of illustrious ancestors in pursuit of freedom together constituted the basic ingredients for the view of Hellenism he articulated in the eulogy.

Bessarion's vision of the Hellenic community differs from that of his former mentor Plethon. Plethon not only preferred ancient Sparta to Athens as the pinnacle of Greek achievement, but also stressed the importance of the Peloponnesus, which he regarded as the heartland of the Greeks. In his precepts, he attached importance to the military and agricultural autonomy of the Hellenes living in the Peloponnesus. Bessarion, on the other hand, regarded ancient Athens as the apex of Greek achievements and celebrated the concomitant cosmopolitan and maritime culture that, according to him, also characterised the Athenian colony of Trebizond. Plethon stressed fixed territoriality and continuity with the past via sedentary stability; Bessarion emphasised overseas migration of the Hellenes as well as their successful struggle for cultural continuity and physical survival even among barbarians. It is, however, difficult to see Bessarion's Athenocentrism as a direct criticism of Plethon's Spartanism, since this would presume that they were addressing the same general problem. Bessarion and Plethon addressed dissimilar audiences in dissimilar contexts, and their interpretations of Hellenism can therefore not be regarded as alternative solutions to an identical problem. Bessarion wrote a rhetorical exercise, perhaps to encourage his fellow Trapezuntines to maintain Hellenic freedom. Plethon, by contrast, wrote a political pamphlet with concrete recommendations to improve the situation of the Peloponnesus and, by extension, the principal remnant of Byzantium. When Bessarion wrote to the despot of the Morea himself, he changed his strategy and, echoing Plethon's precepts, stressed Sparta and not Athens as an ideal (to this I will return on pp. 105–06 below). What is significant is that, despite their different contexts, both Plethon and Bessarion, from their own local perspectives, turned

ἀρετῆς κληρονόμοι πρὸς αὐτοὺς τε διεπράττοντο πᾶν ἀναφέροντες κακείνους. καὶ τύπον ποιοῦμενοι καὶ παράδειγμα διεγίγνοντο φύσει τοῖς βαρβάροις ὄντες πολέμιοι καὶ ἀσύμβατοι καὶ μεγίστοις αὐτῶν ὅροις φωνῇ τε καὶ ψυχῇ διιστάμενοι καὶ κοινὸν οὐδὲν αὐτοῖς ἔχοντες" (Bessarion, ed. Lambros 1916: 168, ll. 4–21 = ed. Lampsides 1984: 42, ll. 14–30).

to ancient Greece instead of Rome for answers, solutions, and models for the present and the future.²⁷

Hellenes and Romans in Bessarion's *Encomium to Trebizond*

For all his emphasis on Hellenic freedom in his *Encomium to Trebizond*, Bessarion could not conceal the fact that the Romans had eventually incorporated the Greeks into their worldwide empire. This posed an obvious problem to his narrative of resistance to foreign rule and preservation of freedom, which was at the heart of his idea of what it meant to be Greek. In this context, it is important to realise that unlike Manuel Chrysoloras, Bessarion was not interested in claiming a Roman legacy for the Hellenes. Just like Theodore Gazes and Constantine Lascaris, he saw the advent of the Romans as a foreign intrusion into Greek affairs. However, unlike his protégés, he did not recognise the undesirable impact of this foreign intervention in Greek history. For Bessarion, the Roman episode provided the background for another tale of how the Hellenes had successfully defended their freedom even under foreign domination. In Bessarion's account, the Romans appeared on the scene with the Mithridatic Wars (89–63 BC, with intervals) and Pompey's definitive defeat of Mithridates VI of Pontus. According to him, Mithridates' defeat was welcomed by the Trapezuntines as their "day of freedom" ("ἐλευθερίας ἡμέρα"), so that the city willingly "handed over herself and her own nurslings to the Romans".²⁸ Everything considered, Bessarion saw the arrival of the Romans and their rule as a positive development for the region, and we must not conflate the Roman defeat of the Pontic kingdom with the complete subjugation of the Hellenes.²⁹ He represented the Romans as an amicable people: they were real philhellenes and knew the Greek language like no other non-Greeks.³⁰ "Therefore",

27 This contrast between Plethon's and Bessarion's views is also noted in Lauritzen (2011), who sees the Anthenocentrism of the latter as a criticism of the former's Spartanism.

28 "Ἐντεῦθεν ἡ ἡμετέρα ἄσμενός τε ἦν ἐκ πολλοῦ ἐπίδοξον εἶχεν ἐλευθερίας εἶδεν ἡμέραν, καὶ τοῖς οἰκουμένης δεσπότηταις εὐθὺς προσχωρήσασα Ῥωμαίοις καὶ τῇ κείνων ἡγεμονίᾳ ἑαυτὴν τε καὶ τοὺς ἰδίους τροφίμους ἐνέδωκε φέρουσα..." [Therefore, our city finally saw the day of liberty which she had long anticipated and, after siding with the Romans, the rulers of the inhabited world, and presenting herself and her own nurslings to them, she handed these over to their authority...] (Bessarion, ed. Lambros 1916: 174, l. 33–175, l. 3 = ed. Lampsides 1984: 49, ll. 19–24).

29 Bessarion (ed. Lambros 1916: 175–76 = ed. Lampsides 1984: 49–50).

30 Bessarion (ed. Lambros 1916: 175–76 = ed. Lampsides 1984: 50). This is reminiscent of Michael Apostoles (ed. Migne 1866: CXXIX) who divided the world into Hellenes, Romans,

he concluded in Horatian fashion, “the Hellenes ruled the Romans rather than being ruled by them, and for that reason they held the privileged position of a body of allies”.³¹

However, Bessarion went beyond the cultural victory of *Graecia capta*. He insisted on the fact that the Greeks had guaranteed (if not made possible) Roman imperial authority in Asia. When Rome fought out the Lazic War with Chosroes I (r. 531–79), Bessarion claimed, only the combined forces of the Romans and his Atheno-Trapezuntine ancestors (“ἡμετέρων πατέρων”, “our forefathers”) were capable of resisting the Sassanid armies.³² When the Romans were seriously threatened by the barbarians, “only our city . . . guarded [their] power” (“μόνη δὲ ἡ ἡμετέρα . . . ἐτήρει τὴν Ῥωμαίων ἡγεμονίαν”).³³ While other parts of Anatolia, Egypt, and Persia surrendered to barbarian invaders, the city of Trebizond remained faithful to Roman rule. Apparently this fuelled Bessarion’s Trapezuntine chauvinism. He ironically recalled that Byzantion had agreed with the barbarians to accept slavery (“δουλεία”), while Trebizond on the contrary continued its resistance against barbarian mastery.³⁴

The Romans continued to rule Trebizond until Bessarion’s own day. He noted in passing that, at the time of writing, they had ruled Trebizond for 1,500

and those who respected their rule on the one hand, and a bunch of resistant peoples (among others the Germans and the Gauls) on the other (the “Ἑλληνικὸν γένος” versus the “βάρβαρον γένος” in Apostoles’ words).

31 “Οὕτως ἦγον Ἕλληνες μᾶλλον τοὺς ἄγοντας ἢ ὑπ’ αὐτῶν ἦγοντο, καὶ τοιοῦτον αὐτοῖς ἦν τὸ σχῆμα τῆς συμμαχίας” (Bessarion, ed. Lambros 1916: 176, ll. 10–11 = ed. Lampsides 1984: 50, ll. 33–34). Cf. Hor. *Epist.* 2.1.156–7: “*Graecia capta ferum victorem cepit et artis | intulit agresti Latio*”.

32 Bessarion (ed. Lambros 1916: 178 = ed. Lampsides 1984: 52–53). Compare the following passage, in which Bessarion probably referred to the Roman victory of AD 542: “Οὐδὲ γὰρ οὐδὲν πλέον δυνηθεὶς ὅτι μὴ Πέτραν ἐλεῖν . . . εἴτα μετὰ πολλῆς ἐκείθεν ζημίας, πολλοὺς τε καὶ ἀγαθοὺς ἀποβαλόμενος τῶν Περσῶν, Ῥωμαίων τε καὶ τῶν ἡμετέρων ἀντικρουσάντων πατέρων καὶ τὴν σφοδρὰν αὐτῶν ῥύμην [Lambros: ῥώμην] ἐπισχόντων σφοδρότερον” [*And capable of doing nothing more except for taking Petra . . . he [Chosroes I] was expelled from there with great loss since he lost many good Persians, while the Romans and our ancestors had offered resistance and so restrained their excessive force with great zeal*] (Bessarion, ed. Lambros 1916: 178, ll. 16–21 = ed. Lampsides 1984: 52, ll. 6–10).

33 Bessarion (ed. Lambros 1916: 180, ll. 14–31 = ed. Lampsides 1984: 55, ll. 9–26).

34 Bessarion (ed. Lambros 1916: 177 = ed. Lampsides 1984: 51–52). Maybe Bessarion here refers to the agreement of John V with Murad I in 1372. Anti-Constantinopolitan sentiment is probably also behind the fact that Bessarion glossed over the history of Byzantion and omitted references to the transfer of the empire by Constantine I (cf. Bessarion, ed. Lampsides 1984: 51, ll. 16–17).

uninterrupted years.³⁵ For him, the Comnenian dynasty was a Roman dynasty appointed by God to rule the Trapezuntines after the Battle of Manzikert (1071).³⁶ Bessarion did not claim the *imperium Romanum* for the Hellenes as a people. For him, it seems, the Hellenes did not *possess* the empire in the same way Western sources and other Byzantines such as George Trapezuntius and, later, Giovanni Gemisto perceived it to. Some of them lived in an empire ruled by Romans and supported it, but as a people they were not in full control of the *imperium Romanum*. Generally, Bessarion's view on the Roman government of the Hellenes comes close to what modern sociologists have called state-framed ethnicity, or a sense of group-belonging embedded within existing political structures without resisting these for the sake of attaining political independence (as is the case in counter-state ethnicity).³⁷ This is where Bessarion disagrees with some of his contemporaries such as Theodore Gazes. Gazes did not acknowledge the continuity of Hellenism in the Roman Empire, but rather focussed on the distortive effects of later (Byzantine) Roman rule on Hellenism (see Chapter 1, pp. 58–61). Bessarion also tacitly disagreed with his mentor Plethon, who had tried to de-Romanise the Romans of both East and West by proving their Hellenic origin (see Chapter 1, pp. 40–42).

Panhellenism and Cultural Ownership in Bessarion's *Letter to Constantine*

The way in which Bessarion presented the Hellenes in his eulogy is emblematic of his general belief that Hellenism could survive in various contexts, even among barbarians. For him, Greekness transcended local, political, or even religious boundaries. Based on linguistic unity, a shared origin and history, and a collective character, this notion of Greekness was principally secular.

35 “Ἐνιαυτοὶ γὰρ ἤδη πρὸς τοῖς πεντακοσίοις παρωχήμεσαν χίλιοι Ῥωμαίοι ὑποταγείσης...” (Bessarion, ed. Lambros 1916: 176, ll. 18–19 = ed. Lampsides 1984: 51, ll. 7–8). On the basis of this line Lampsides (1955) argued that the eulogy must have been written in 1436–37.

36 Bessarion (ed. Lambros 1916: 182–83, ll. 9–10 = ed. Lampsides 1984: 56–58, ll. 3–5). Cf. Bessarion (ed. Lambros 1916: 184, ll. 2–3 = ed. Lampsides 1984: 59, ll. 1–2). In a letter to Bessarion written after 1461, his compatriot George Amiroutzes (ed. Migne 1866: 724) described the last Trapezuntine emperor David Megas Comnenus as “the king of Hellenes and Romans” (“Ἐλλήνων τε καὶ Ῥωμαίων... βασιλεύς”), thus acknowledging that the empire of Trebizond was not an exclusively Roman but also a Hellenic empire.

37 See here Brubaker (2004: 145, 282).

Bessarion's letter to Despot Constantine illustrates this.³⁸ He sent it to the despot of the Morea from his new home in Rome in 1444, between four and eight years after he had composed the *Encomium*. In it, Bessarion followed in the footsteps of Plethon and advised the despot about affairs in the Peloponnesus, mostly rephrasing his teacher's previous admonitions.³⁹ While Plethon had started from a principally regionalist concept of Greekness, Bessarion wrote with a cosmopolitan and more inclusive vision of the Greek community in mind. Although he regarded himself as an Atheno-Trapezuntine, he strongly identified with the inhabitants of the Morea because they were fellow Hellenes: he referred to the condition of the Peloponnesus as "our affairs" and regretted Ottoman rule over "us, barbarians over Hellenes", reviving the classical opposition between Greeks and barbarians.⁴⁰

In his letter to the despot, Bessarion explained how he imagined the Hellenic community. He defined the Hellenes as a distinctive *genos* with a particular character; they were mild by nature, able to attain virtue, to imitate the good, naturally noble and ambitious, and eager to acquire all forms of learning.⁴¹ As in his *Encomium*, the cardinal also praised the Hellenes for their incessant love for freedom.⁴² The despot now ruled over the same people who had once defeated the Persians at Plataea and had marched into Asia under the guidance of king Agesilaus.⁴³ The general idea of the memorandum was that, together with an army of well-trained Peloponnesians, the despot would

38 See Bessarion (ed. Mohler 1942c: 439–49; ed. Lambros 1906). In his edition of the text, Lambros argued that Bessarion's address must have been written in the period 1443–46 (cf. Mohler 1942: 440). Discussions of the letter are Zakythinis (1975: 11, 356–58), Irmscher (1976), Mavrommatis (1994), Pardos (1998: 546–58), Harris (2006: 92–93), and Maltezos (2006: 101–04).

39 For a comparative reading of Plethon's and Bessarion's treatises, see Dräseke (1911: 111–15). That Bessarion knew the Peloponnesus well is not only apparent from his letter to Constantine Palaeologus, but also from a Latin letter he wrote to frater Giacomo Piceno in order to convince the addressee of an anti-Ottoman campaign in support of Despot Thomas Palaeologus (1459) (Bessarion, ed. Mohler 1942c: 490–93). See also his letter to Demetrius Palaeologus, despot of the Morea (Bessarion, ed. Mohler 1942c: 425–26).

40 Bessarion (ed. Mohler 1942c: 443, ll. 34–36 = Lambros 1906: 20, ll. 11–13).

41 “Ἡμερον τὴν φύσιν τὸ τῶν Ἑλλήνων ἐστὶ γένος, ἐπιμελητικὸν ἀρετῆς, μιμητικὸν τοῦ καλοῦ, φύσει γενναῖόν τε καὶ φιλότιμον, πρὸς πᾶσαν παιδείαν ἑτοιμὸν τε καὶ πρόχειρον” (Bessarion, ed. Mohler 1942c: 445, ll. 27–29 = Lambros 1906: 22, ll. 25–27).

42 Bessarion (ed. Lambros 1916: 151, ll. 11–16; 168, ll. 4–9).

43 Bessarion (ed. Mohler 1942c: 443, ll. 2–16 = ed. Lambros 1906: 19, ll. 6–23) also mentioned Xanthippus (against the Romans), Gylippus (against the Athenians), Brasidas (against the Chalcidians), Agesilaus (against the Egyptians), Lysander and his successor Callicratidas (against the Persians).

eventually liberate Europe, and after that would march against Asia with his new Spartans to claim back the power (“ἀρχή”) that belonged to him by right of inheritance.⁴⁴ In other words, the Spartans fulfilled the same function the Trapezuntines continued to serve under the Comneni: to maintain Hellenic freedom, while at the same time supporting an over-arching but amicable Roman power. That Bessarion indeed saw the Palaeologi as a Roman dynasty like the Comneni appears from the fact that in one of his manuscripts he traced their dynasty directly back to Romulus.⁴⁵

Bessarion’s imaginary community of Hellenes was thus largely independent of dynastic or territorial boundaries. His sense of Panhellenism becomes evident in several other corners of his work as well. In an address to the Venetian doge, for instance, Bessarion referred to “the rest of Greece (*reliqua Graecia*) that is now subject to your imperium”, which shows that his notion of Greece embraced more than the territories inhabited by the Greek-speaking subjects of a Roman emperor, either Comnenian or Palaeologan.⁴⁶ The Hellenes, ruled by Palaeologi, Comneni, Venetians, or Ottoman Turks, living either in Europe or in Asia, for Bessarion all together constituted a distinctive imaginary community sharing a particular character, a language, and probably also a certain lineage going back to the ancient Greek world.

Although Bessarion was very clear about how he saw Greek community, his idea of its centre was notably flexible. While in his *Encomium* he stressed the centrality of ancient Athens, in a letter to the despot of the Morea, Demetrius Palaeologus, dating to his stay in Mistra between ca. 1425 and 1433, he claimed that the Peloponnesian peninsula was superior to Constantinople in many respects, and referred to the Peloponnesians in the first person plural.⁴⁷ In his memorandum to Constantine Palaeologus, he also cited ancient Sparta as surpassing all other parts of Hellas in “εὐνομία” and “δόξη” because of its strict regulation of conspicuous consumption.⁴⁸ Shortly after the fall of Constantinople, he made Constantinople the centre of the Greek world, complaining that

44 “Τούτου γεγενημένου ἄλλος Ἀγεσίλαος νέος μετὰ τῶν νέων Λακεδαιμονίων, οὓς αὐτὸς ἀναπλάσεις, ἐπὶ τὴν Ἀσίαν διαβήσῃ, τὴν πατρικὴν ἀποληψόμενος πάσαν ἀρχήν” (Bessarion, ed. Mohler 1942c: 443, ll. 14–16 = ed. Lambros 1906: 19, ll. 20–23).

45 The autographic list (running from Romulus and Remus until Michael IX Palaeologus) is in BNM, Marc. gr. 407 and printed in Schreiner (2008: 418–24).

46 “... *reliqua Graecia*, quae nunc imperio vestro subjecta est” (Bessarion, ed. Mohler 1942c: 476, ll. 29–30).

47 For the Greek text of the letter, see Bessarion (ed. Mohler 1942c: 425–26, esp. 426, ll. 17–35).

48 Bessarion (ed. Mohler 1942c: 444, esp. ll. 15–20 = ed. Lambros 1906: 21–22, esp. ll. 12–17).

...the capital of entire Greece, the splendour and ornament of the Orient, the college of the best arts, the reservoir of all good things, is taken, pillaged, plundered, ruined by the most inhuman barbarians, by the most ardent enemies of the Christian faith, by the most savage beasts.⁴⁹

Changing circumstances apparently influenced the differing emphases and nuances in Bessarion's vision of the Greek world. Even so, such differences did not encroach upon the unity of his imaginary community of Hellenes.

For Bessarion, the Hellenes as a group not only shared a common descent and character, but also a claim to a literary or linguistic heritage. In this respect, Bessarion's letter to Despot Constantine Palaeologus is an important document. In his advice to the despot, he emphasised the importance of training: military, technical, and theoretical. Blending prophecy, eulogy, and advice, he claimed that the despot would "return to our people the possession of literature (τὸ χρῆμα τῶν λόγων)", the only thing that distinguishes men from beasts, and Hellenes from barbarians, and "in which our people once flourished and from which all knowledge, understanding and art came forth and blossomed".⁵⁰ To achieve this, Bessarion proposed to send Hellenic boys ("οἱ ἡμέτεροι νέοι") to Italy in order to study and to take back home the required expertise to repair the current state of the Peloponnesus.⁵¹ These lines are particularly important to understand Bessarion's views on the state of Hellenism in relation to Western progress. In anticipation of his critics in the despot's entourage, the cardinal asserted that it was not shameful for a Greek to learn from a Latin. "We will not take something alien", he argued,

49 "Urbs...totius Graeciae caput, splendor et decus Orientis, gymnasium optimarum artium, bonorum omnium receptaculum, ab immanissimis barbaris, a saevissimis Christianae fidei hostibus, a truculentissimis feris capta, spoliata, direpta, exhausta est" (Bessarion, ed. Mohler 1942c: 475, ll. 24–29).

50 "Τὸ χρῆμα τῶν λόγων, ᾧ μόνος τῶν θηρίων ἄνθρωπος διαφέρει καὶ τῶν βαρβάρων "Ελλήνες διακρίνονται, ἐν οἷς ποτε τὸ ἡμέτερον ἦρχμακε γένος κάξ ὦν πᾶσα ἐπιστήμη καὶ γνώσις καὶ τέχνη ἐβλάστησέ τε καὶ ἤνθησεν, ἀποδώσεις αὐθις τῷ γένει..." (Bessarion, ed. Mohler 1942c: 447, ll. 7–10 = ed. Lambros 1906: 24, ll. 27–30).

51 See here Bessarion (ed. Mohler 1942c: 447, ll. 7–31 = ed. Lambros 1906: 24, l. 27–25, l. 20). As Kourniakos (2013: 453) explains, such ideas were not new and circulated in fourteenth-century Western tracts.

... but we will take back from our debtors the things that belong to us: if someone demands to have it returned, they are obliged to give back what they did not justly *take back*, but *took away* (“ὃ μὴ ἀπέλαβον, ἀλλὰ ἔλαβον”).⁵²

Therefore, Bessarion could refer to “our wisdom” (“ἡ ἡμετέρα σοφία”), not only when referring to literature and theoretical knowledge, but also to practical skills such as, for instance, shipbuilding. In his letter, Bessarion in fact inverted the Western scheme of the *translatio studiorum*, or the idea that cultural leadership was transferred from one people to the other through history, normally progressively westwards and ideally together with political power, but not necessarily so. Unlike his protégé Apostoles, who aggressively asserted Greek cultural superiority over the West (see Chapter 2, pp. 89–90), Bessarion framed the relationship between the Greek world and the Latin West in terms of resolving debts. Bessarion’s protégé Ianus Lascaris would later articulate a similar idea for a Latin audience (see the penultimate section of this Chapter, as well as Chapter 5 about Lascaris’ Florentine speech).

Bessarion’s Idea of Hellenic Freedom Under Romans and Turks in *His Encomium and Encyclica*

As we have seen, Bessarion’s notion of Greekness was tied up with the idea of freedom; both in his Trapezuntine eulogy and in his letter to the despot of the Morea the word ἐλευθερία is ubiquitous. For Bessarion, freedom was a complex category. In classical Greek fashion it was categorically opposed to slavery (δουλεία, δουλεῦν) in the sense of being dominated by someone or something perceived as foreign or external. The classical understanding of ἐλευθερία in terms of democracy could be widened in order to include political self-government that did not necessarily coincide with democracy.⁵³ Bessarion

52 “Ἡμεῖς δὲ οὐδὲ ἀλλότριον τι ληψόμεθα, ἀλλὰ τὰ αὐτῶν παρὰ τῶν ὀφειλόντων ἀποληψόμεθα· ὀφείλουσι γὰρ ὄντος τοῦ ἀπαιτούντος ἀποδοῦναι, ὃ μὴ ἀπέλαβον, ἀλλὰ ἔλαβον” (Bessarion, ed. Mohler 1942c: 447, ll. 29–31 = ed. Lambros 1906: 25, ll. 17–20).

53 On the evolution of the concept of freedom in ancient Greek literature, see in particular the classic study of Raaflaub (2004), which is a revised English edition of Raaflaub (1985). As Forte (1972: 27) observed, from the second century onwards, the notion of ἐλευθερία came to denote any form of self-government, not necessarily democracy. This obviously made the term extremely malleable and highly dependent upon the context in which it

added to the complexity of the concept, and his distinction is reminiscent of Christian rather than classical notions of freedom. Discussing the incorporation of Trebizond into the Roman Empire in his *Encomium to Trebizond*, he distinguished between two kinds of freedom, namely freedom of thought or mind (“γνώμη”, “ψυχή”) and spiritual freedom and freedom of body (“σῶμα”) or physical freedom.

According to Bessarion, spiritual freedom was superior to physical freedom because it could exist independently, while physical liberty crumbled without freedom of thought.⁵⁴ Bessarion's idea of physical freedom refers to political self-government (“ὄντως πολιτεύειν” and “τὰ καθ’ αὐτοῦς διοικεῖν”) and does not so much denote the absence of internal tyranny as safety from external political and military domination. Bessarion's idea of spiritual freedom in the *Encomium* is less clear-cut. It seems to refer to the maintenance of the independence of one's way of thinking, even if one is not entirely free in terms of political action. As such, it is connected to the preservation of language and customs. In his *Encomium*, Bessarion thus allowed for forms of cultural and spiritual freedom to exist even without absolute political authority. In the context of his discourse, the distinction between the two kinds of Hellenic freedom is useful in demonstrating that the Trapezuntines had never really lost an essential form of freedom after their absorption into foreign, Roman political structures: in essence, they remained unsubdued and without masters (in Bessarion's words: “ἀδούλωτοι”, “ἀδέσποτοι”). It helped Bessarion to praise the persistent freedom of the Hellenes in Trebizond without denying the dignity of the Roman monarchy of which his profoundly Hellenic city was the proud capital.

As such, Bessarion's treatment of his city's ancient freedom in the context of the Roman Empire contrasts with the way in which some contemporary Italians addressed a similar problem, most notably Leonardo Bruni, whom Bessarion probably met in Florence in 1439, where the Florentine humanist delivered a speech in Greek on the constitution of Florence.⁵⁵ Unlike Bessarion, Bruni stressed the principal interdependence of literary culture and political freedom.⁵⁶ Especially in his historical works, he emphasised that the Roman

was employed. Also in Bessarion's case, the notion of self-government gains a particular meaning that is largely dependent upon his personal circumstances and viewpoints.

54 Bessarion (ed. Lambros 1916: 72 = ed. Lampsides 1984: 115–28).

55 On the occasion of the Council of Florence, Bruni wrote a *Polity of the Florentine* in Greek. The best manuscript of this treatise was owned by Plethon and shows his annotations. For the text of the treatise and an introduction, see Moulakis (1986).

56 Baron (1955: 363).

Empire had ended urban independence in Etruria. According to the historian, moreover, original Florentine virtue (*virtus*) had also declined, due to leisure and inaction under the Roman emperors. Bruni's distinctively negative interpretation of the Roman Empire obviously suited a republican agenda, in which imperial Rome stood for an essentially misguided form of government.⁵⁷ As we have seen, from his Byzantine Greek perspective, Bessarion did not share Bruni's hostile attitude towards imperial Rome and regarded the Romans as sympathetic allies rather than repressive masters.⁵⁸ When Byzantium fell and the Hellenes came under Ottoman rule, however, Bessarion revised his notion of Hellenic freedom to adapt it to the new circumstances.

Although Bessarion could depict the Romans as a good-natured people in the context of his *Encomium*, after the fall of the Byzantine Empire the Ottoman Turks posed a very different problem.⁵⁹ In 1463, in his capacity as Latin patriarch of Constantinople, Bessarion wrote an encyclical letter to the Greeks in which he tried to explain his conversion to Rome. In this letter, the cardinal eventually had to conclude that the Hellenes had lost more than their “μοναρχία” or, in Bessarion's own Latin translation, their “principatus” and their “imperium orbis”.⁶⁰ Unlike the Trapezuntines in the Roman Empire, the Hellenes under Ottoman rule had also lost the last vestiges of their wisdom (“σοφία” or “sapientia”) and knowledge (“ἐπιστήμη” or “disciplina”). As such they had—for the first time in their history—entered a most shameful state of slavery under barbarian, unchristian rulers (“δουλεία” or “servitus”). The rationale behind the different treatment of Romans and Turks as rulers of the Hellenes must be sought in Bessarion's views on good rulers and government on the one hand and the nature of the Turks on the other. Unlike the

57 Bruni discussed Florentine freedom most notably in his famous *Laudatio Florentinae urbis*, his history of the Florentine people, and in his funeral oration for Nanni Strozzi, but the topic resurfaces throughout his work. An overview of Bruni's views on freedom (and their connection with Rome) is offered by Baron (1955: 358–64). On Bruni's very critical view of ancient Rome (especially in his Florentine history), see in particular Ianziti (2012: 105–07). His views on imperial Rome became very influential and resurfaced, for example, in the work of Machiavelli (Baron 1955: 368–71).

58 Given the disputed composition date of the *Encomium*, it is difficult to say if Bessarion intended the text somehow to contribute to Italian discussions of the concept of freedom.

59 Bessarion's vision of the Ottoman Turks has been discussed mainly in the context of his *Orationes contra Turcas* (on which see below, pp. 115–28). For Bessarion's view on the Turks, see Carretto (1994) and Bisaha (2004: 109–14). For the views of people in his entourage (mainly, Theodore Gazes), see Meserve (2008: 123–42).

60 Bessarion (ed. Migne 1866a: 452–53). Bessarion's own Latin translation of the relevant passage is in cols. 481–82.

Romans, the Ottoman Turks were not a good-natured people. For Bessarion they were the ultimate barbarians, characterised by an innate inclination towards destruction. Bessarion expressed this extremely hostile image of the Turks in his Trapezuntine eulogy, but did so most articulately in his later *Orationes contra Turcas*, which will be central to the next section. Bessarion also saw an intimate relationship between the intellectual and moral status of the governing and that of the governed.⁶¹ After summing up the virtuous features of the Greeks in his memorandum for the despot of the Morea, Bessarion added that the Hellenes needed a leader and a teacher (“κορυφαίος” and “διδάσκαλος”) to stimulate them to actualise their innate qualities.⁶² A barbarian ruler such as the Islamic Sultan could by definition not be a guide for his Greek subjects. Barbarians were stereotypically ignorant of and averse to Greek learning. If Greek wisdom and knowledge were stored in Greek literature, a barbarian ruler would erase them together with Greek letters.

In his *Encyclica*, however, the cardinal stressed that what remained for the Greeks even in their state of barbarian subordination was the “excellence (ἀρετή) of their character that [made] those who possess it perfect men”.⁶³ This assertion complements and further refines Bessarion’s earlier distinction between physical and spiritual freedom. While the Hellenes under Ottoman rule lost much of their spiritual freedom, due to a loss of Hellenic wisdom and knowledge, they maintained something of their character, which naturally tended towards the good and noble. It suffices to recall Bessarion’s letter to Constantine Palaeologus, in which he claimed that the Hellenes were, among other things, mild by nature (“τὴν φύσιν”) and naturally (“φύσει”) noble and ambitious (see above, p. 104). Their natural propensity for excellence created room for the reawakening of what had been lost with the arrival of the barbarian invaders.⁶⁴ In this Hellenic reawakening, Bessarion saw a role for himself.

61 Compare Bessarion’s Chapter on Plato’s views on monarchism in his *In calumniatorem Platonis* (Bessarion, ed. Mohler 1927: 581–89).

62 Bessarion (ed. Mohler 1942c: 445, ll. 29–30 = ed. Lambros 1906: 22, ll. 27–29). In the same vein, Bessarion (ed. Mohler 1942c: 443, ll. 14–16 = ed. Lambros 1906: 19, ll. 20–23) said that the despot would march against Asia with the Spartans “whom you yourself will make” (“οὗς αὐτὸς ἀναπλάσει”).

63 “ἀρετὴ δὲ ὅσηπερ εἰς τὸ ἦθος τείνει, καὶ καλοὺς ἀγαθοὺς ἀπεργάζεται τοὺς κεκτημένους”/ “virtus sola quae ad mores pertinet quaeque studiosos sui bonos efficit” (Bessarion, ed. Migne 1866a: 453/481).

64 A similar idea resurfaces much later in Mousouros’ *Hymn to Plato*. When Plato prophesies the liberation of Byzantium, he claims that after its liberation the “Greek people (λεῶς Γραικός) that is presently exhausted by slavery” will remember its “ancient virtue”

Bessarion as a Defender of Hellenic Freedom After 1453

Bessarion's ideas about Hellenic freedom help us to better understand how he saw his role in the Byzantine Greek diaspora. In Italy, the cardinal's court in Rome became a refuge for many Greeks who had left their homes and come to Italy. Just as his Trapezuntine ancestors had helped "suppliants of the same *genos* and the same language", so did Bessarion.⁶⁵ It is well known that he helped many Byzantine scholars come to the West and find employment there. He supported, among others, Constantine Lascaris in Messina, Demetrius Chalcondylas in Padua, and Andronikos Kallistos in Florence.⁶⁶ After the fall of Byzantium, he wrote that "the prospective obliteration of our remaining Hellenes cause[d] [him] enormous grief".⁶⁷

Together with Bessarion's ideal of Hellenic freedom, his concern for the recovery of Hellenism resurfaced in his famous library project. The well-known letter in which he explained the reason behind his huge collection of Greek manuscripts echoes the main concerns of his *Encomium*. According to the cardinal, the manuscript collection was intended to save the Hellenes from remaining "voiceless" ("ἄφωνοι") and similar to "barbarians" ("βάρβαροι") and "slaves" ("ἀνδράποδα") (see Chapter 2, pp. 84–85). According to Bessarion in the *Encomium*, the Hellenes had always resisted the "βάρβαροι" as well as slavery ("δουλεία") and had preserved their language and customs even when they were surrounded by barbarian tribes. Through his library project, Bessarion helped to maintain the values that his Trapezuntine ancestors had promoted. By conserving Greek literature, he also preserved the Greeks' ancestral "σοφία" and "ἐπιστήμη" it contained, and so at least a substantial part of their spiritual freedom. In so doing, he continued the Athenian tradition of defending freedom and resisting barbarism and slavery. His support of individual Hellenes fits with this concept: Bessarion not only assisted Byzantines in making a living in the West, but also helped to conserve Greek learning for future generations

("ἀρχαίης ἀρετῆς") (Mousouros, ed. Legrand 1885c: 110, ll. 131–34 = ed. Siphakis 1954: 382, ll. 131–34). For Mousouros, see also above p. 57, n. 105.

65 Bessarion (ed. Lambros 1916: 170, ll. 2–4 = ed. Lampsides 1984: 44, ll. 13–14) praised the ancestors of the Trapezuntines, among other things, for the fact that they never disregarded or drove away suppliants of their own stock and language: "... τὸ μὴ πρὸς αὐτῶν εἶναι παριδεῖν τε καὶ ἀπώσασθαι ἰκέτας ἀνθρώπους ταῦτοῦ γένους καὶ τῆς αὐτῆς φωνῆς τε καὶ γλώττης...".

66 See here Bianca (2013: 157; 1999: 10).

67 "λυπεῖ δὲ με σφόδρα ἡ ὑμῶν τῶν ὑπολειπομένων Ἑλλήνων προσδοκουμένη φθόρα" (Bessarion, ed. Mohler 1942c: 480, ll. 11–12); "τὴν τε παντελῆ Ἑλλήνων ἀπώλειαν" (p. 482, ll. 13–14).

of Greeks. After his death there would be no other Greek refugee rich enough to gather and maintain such a precious collection of Greek books.

Bessarion also exerted his influence to maintain Greek autonomy in a more properly political sense. The concept of physical freedom resurfaced, for example, in a curious speech he delivered on the occasion of the transferral of the head of Saint Andrew from Mistra to Rome in 1462. The relic was a present from Thomas Palaeologus to Pope Pius II. Next to the pope, Bessarion had a leading role in this event, staged to emphasise the universality of the Roman Church. The climax of the theatrical event was a fictitious dialogue between the pope (representing Saint Peter) and the Greek cardinal (representing Peter's brother Saint Andrew).⁶⁸ In Bessarion's speech, recorded in the memoirs of Pope Pius II, Saint Andrew expressed his hopes that with the pope's help the Greeks would regain their ancient freedom. In the Saint's words, the Greeks "are now subject to an impious and most savage enemy and are not only deprived of their physical freedom (*libertas corporum*), but also in danger of losing the integrity of their faith (*fidei integritas*)".⁶⁹ The Saint's distinction between "*libertas corporum*" and "*fidei integritas*" echoes Bessarion's distinction between physical and spiritual freedom in his *Encomium*. In this specifically religious context, the concept of spiritual freedom was redefined in terms of "*fidei integritas*". Through the *persona* of Saint Andrew, Bessarion urged the pope to liberate the Greeks from the Ottoman Turks and to restore both their physical freedom and their orthodoxy, i.e. Roman Catholicism. While it is quite clear what the restitution of the "*fidei integritas*" means, it is less easy to see what the restoration of the "*libertas corporum*" of the Greeks would entail in Bessarion's view. Did the cardinal aim to restore the Eastern Roman Empire? Did he envision a Greek kingdom in the manner of Chalkokondyles? A Venetian protectorate? I shall come back to these questions in the last section of this chapter, as well as in the last chapter of the book.

It is well known that Bessarion exerted all his energies to organise a large-scale crusade to actually liberate the Christian subjects of the Ottoman Sultan.⁷⁰ It is also well known that all these attempts eventually failed, most notably the crusade organised by Pius II, who died in Ancona before sailing off to Greece. Being aware that concerted action in the West was impossible, Bessarion sought other means to restore the "*libertas corporum*" of the Greeks. There

68 For the details of this transferral, see Ronchey (2008b) and Treffers (2006).

69 Piccolomini (ed. Totaro 1984: 1548).

70 For a synoptic account of Bessarion's endeavours in favour of the crusade, see Binner (1980: 23–110), but also Irmischer (1976), Manselli (1973), Mohler (1927), and Schuhmann (1975), absent from Binner's bibliography.

is evidence that, in the early 1470s, the cardinal was involved in the establishment of a semi-autonomous community for Greeks in the Maremma area in the neighbourhood of Siena.⁷¹ Anna Notaras—the affluent daughter of the last Byzantine *megadux*—planned to invest in the area in order to found a Greek colony there.⁷² Although Bessarion did not live to see the outcome of the negotiations with Siena (ended in 1474), the report of the Sienese Consistory clearly shows that the planned Greek community would enjoy considerable sovereignty and was to be governed in accordance with the code of Justinian as revised by later emperors and the Church.⁷³ One modern historian called the planned colony a “surrogate Peloponnesus”.⁷⁴ In such a polity both the physical and spiritual freedom of the Greeks would be secured until they returned to their homeland.

Viewing Bessarion's activities in favour of the Greeks against the backdrop of the centrality of Hellenic freedom in his thought allows us to see a more or less coherent programme behind his Hellenism, mainly revolving around a set of two recurrent and interrelated concepts, namely Hellenism versus barbarism and freedom versus slavery. Bessarion's *Encomium to Trebizond* allows us to understand Bessarion's activities in support of the Hellenes as the continuation of the Atheno-Trapezuntine tradition from which he felt he came. Just as his ancestors had maintained their freedom far away from their metropolis in Attica, so Bessarion attempted to maintain the spiritual and physical freedom of his expatriate fellow Hellenes. Just as his Athenian, Milesian, and Sinopean

71 Documents relating to the curious project are available in Calisse (1896) and Cecchini (1930). See also Harris (2006: esp. 95–97) and Maltezou (2006: esp. 104–05). It is not wholly clear to what degree Bessarion was involved in the plans, as his part of the correspondence with the Consistory of Siena has not been found. On 17 November 1471, Battista Bellani reported to the Sienese Consistory that Cardinal Bessarion had informed him about Greek families wanting to settle in Sienese territory (Cecchini 1930: 5). Together with large parts of the negotiations, the letter of the notary public of the Sienese Consistory to the cardinal in which he explains the decision of the Consistory to allow a Greek settlement in the Maremma area is preserved in the Sienese Archivio dello Stato (30 August 1472, less than three months before Bessarion's death, cf. Cecchini 1930: 29–30).

72 On Anna Notaras, see Nicol (1996: 96–109). The area was to be sold on the term that Anna's successor could be neither “an unknown or suspect person of the Sienese community nor some lord in Italy who is an Italian by birth nor the son of a lord of Italian extraction” (cited from Cecchini 1930: 36: “[Anna petit] quod talis subcessor non sit persona incognita vel suspecta communis Senarum et non sit aliquis dominus in Italia originalis Italicus, nec filius domini de Italia originalis”).

73 Cecchini (1930: 38).

74 Harris (2006: 95).

ancestors had battled the barbarians, so Bessarion attempted to avert any concession to barbarism in this darkest moment of Greek history. In so doing, the cardinal embodied the values and customs of his Atheno-Trapezuntine ancestors. That he indeed did so for his contemporaries is clear from Cardinal Capranica's funeral oration for Bessarion. In it, Capranica summarised in Latin the argument Bessarion had made in his *Encomium*. "His fatherland is Trapezus", the cardinal proclaimed,

... a colony of the Sinopeans. As a matter of fact, the Milesians established Sinope, the Athenians Miletus. Inheriting the nobility of his parents, grandparents, and ancestors, he tempered the opulence and intemperance of the Asian genius with Attic moderation.⁷⁵

This idea was also taken up by Michael Apostoles in his funeral oration for the cardinal, as well as by Platina in a panegyric delivered when Bessarion was still alive.⁷⁶ At the same time, however, Bessarion's Greekness was treated as something the cardinal had left behind when he converted to the Latin dogma and moved to Italy. Platina, for example, claimed that, once Bessarion had become cardinal, he "in a short time absorbed the customs and literature of the Latins to such a degree that he was like one of ours and seemed not to be born anywhere else".⁷⁷ This suggests that Bessarion, notwithstanding his association with the Greek-speaking world and his self-conscious Greekness, was also

75 "Bessario nobili et antiqua Graecia ortus oriundusque fuit. Siquidem eius patria est Trapezus, Sinopensium colonia. Sinopem vero condidere Milesii, Miletum Athenienses. Ex his parentibus, avis, abavis maioribusque nobilitatem referens ubertatem atque redundantiam Asiani ingenii Attica moderatione temperavit" (Capranica, ed. Mohler 1942: 406, ll. 11–15). Capranica knew Bessarion's Trapezuntine eulogy and his letter regarding affairs on the Peloponnesus (see Capranica, ed. Mohler 1942: 410, ll. 6–7, where he refers to "laudationes scilicet duae patriae suae Trapezuntiae et Isthmi").

76 "Τούτῳ μὲν δὴ πατρίς ἐτύγγανεν οὔσα μετὰ τὴν βασιλίδα βασιλὶς τῶν πόλεων Τραπεζοῦς, πόλις ἀρχαιοτάτῃ καὶ Ἑλληνίς..." (M. Apostoles, ed. Migne 1886: CXXXII). "Is enim ex vetere Graecia oriundus natusque in Asia, utrumque collegit generosi spiritus semina. Trapezuntius, Sinopensium colonia, eius patria est; Sinopem condidere Milesii, Miletum Athenienses. Ex his, ut a parentibus, avis, proavis nobilitatem referens, redundantiam Asiani ingenii frugalitate Attica compescuit" (Platina, ed. Migne 1866: CIV). For some background to funeral orations for cardinals in general and Bessarion in particular, see Henderson (2013: 83–92).

77 "Accepto autem de more galero, insigne cardinalatus, ita brevi homo ingeniosus et acutus Latinorum mores et litteraturam imbibit, ut ex nostratibus unus et non alibi natus videretur" (Platina, ed. Migne 1866: CVII). See also Henderson (2013: 90).

capable of silencing his Greek persona. When he presented himself predominantly as a cardinal in his Latin writings, he indeed played down his Greekness.

Bessarion's Dissimulation of Greekness

Apart from a Hellene with a mission of freedom, Bessarion also was a cardinal with a mission for the Roman Church and the ambition to become pope. Just as he recognised the cultural superiority of the “*natio Graeca*”,⁷⁸ Bessarion also defended the superiority of the “*ecclesia Romana*”.⁷⁹ His epitaph in the Church of the Holy Apostles in Rome included all his Roman ecclesiastical titles, but also stated that he was born in “noble Greece” (“*nobili Graecia ortus*”).⁸⁰ On one of the manuscripts he donated to the monastery of Grottaferrata it is stated that Bessarion was “a cardinal by rank (τὴν ἀξίαν) and a Hellene by descent (τὸ γένος)”.⁸¹ Although the authenticity of his funerary inscription is

78 In a letter to Trapezuntius, Bessarion (ed. Mohler 1942c: 451) claims that the “*natio Graeca*” is “*praeclarissima et sapientissima*” and that in Greece “*omnis est ortus sapientiae fons*”. Cf. Bianca (1999: 5).

79 Bianca (2013: 157–58) and Kourniakos (2013: 442–46).

80 The text of the epitaph reads “BESSARIO EPISCOPVS THVSCVLANVS | SANCTAE ROMANAE ECCLESIAE CARDINALIS | PATRIARCHA CONSTANTINOPOLITANVS | NOBILI GRAECIA ORTVS ORIVNDVSQUE | SIBI VIVENS POSVIT | ANNO SALVTIS MCCCCLXVI || ΤΟΥΤ ΕΤΙ ΒΗΣΣΑΡΙΩΝ | ΖΩΝ ΑΝΥΣΑ ΣΩΜΑΤΙ | ΣΗΜΑ · | ΠΝΕΥΜΑ ΔΕ ΦΕΥΞΕΙΤΑΙ | ΠΡΟΣ ΘΕΟΝ ΑΘΑΝΑΤΟΝ” [*Bessarion, Bishop of Tuscany, Cardinal of the Holy Roman Church, Patriarch of Constantinople, born and descended from noble Greece, erected [this] for himself while still alive, in the Year of Redemption 1466. || I, Bessarion, erected, when I was still alive, this monument for my dead body: My spirit shall flee to God immortal*] (cited from Forcella 1863: 226, n. 656). Theodore Gazes translated the Greek text into Latin: “Bessarion hanc vivus fecerat ossibus urnam | Inmortalem adiit spiritus deum” (BML, Plut. 34.24, fol. 2r). Cf. A.M. Bandini (1775: 153) and L. Bandini (1777: 96). It should be noted that “*nobili Graecia ortus oriundusque*” was not in the version foreseen in Bessarion’s will (Migne 1866: 80; Mohler 1923: 21, n. 3). Richardson (2009: 220–33, 453–55) offers a brief description of what Bessarion’s chapel and the tomb originally looked like. For a detailed study of the chapel’s iconography or what is left of it, see Tiberia (1992) (cf. Haas 1981 and Lollini 1991). As in his correspondence, Bessarion’s title of Cardinal precedes his title of Patriarch of Constantinople (Stefec 2012c: 327).

81 Reference is to Cod. Crypt. Gr. 161 [Z.δ.I] of the Grottaferrata monastery. The line is “† ἐκ τῶν Βησσαρίωνος καρδινάλεως τὴν ἀξίαν, τὸ γένος Ἑλλήνος” (cited from Fiaccadori et al. 1994: 385). For similar inscriptions on other manuscripts of Bessarion, see Mondrain (2013: 199–200) and Bianca (1999: 8, n. 42).

disputed,⁸² such evidence points at Bessarion's double role as a Greek patriot and as a Roman cardinal. Often these two roles coexisted, and sometimes they even coincided, as when the cardinal personified Saint Andrew at the occasion of the transferral of his relic to Rome (see above, p. 112). In his writings, however, Greek and cardinalitial self-representations did not always coexist in this way. While for a Greek audience, he presented himself as a Hellene, it is notable that for a Latin audience, and in Latin, he not only emphasised his role as a cardinal of the Roman Church, but sometimes also played down his Greekness. While most of the texts discussed so far were written in Greek and for fellow Greeks (though they were not unknown to his Latin audience), this section will explore the often cited but seldom discussed *Orationes contra Turcas*, published in 1470 to urge the Latin West to take up arms against the Ottoman Turks.

As we have seen, Bessarion thought of the Greeks as a coherent group with a specific character that should ideally be protected by a form of political organisation. He also emphasised the idea of Hellenic freedom and sought to promote Greek interests in the West where he could. The cardinal has therefore been praised as a real Greek patriot, and some even claimed that his crusading appeals remained without success precisely because his patriotic zeal eclipsed his political deftness.⁸³ All the same, Bessarion's crowning achievement in crusade literature, the *Orationes contra Turcas*, show him in his role as Roman cardinal rather than Greek patriot. Even if Hellenic freedom must have been central to his thought, Bessarion did not focus on secular Hellenic concerns when he most eagerly defended the liberation of the Greeks and other peoples from Ottoman rule.

Bessarion composed his *Orationes contra Turcas* on the occasion of the fall of his protectorate of Negroponte (Euboea) in that same year.⁸⁴ In these speeches, the cardinal personally addressed the princes of Europe to join forces in a large-scale crusade against the Ottoman Turks. Although Venice was in fact the only power directly affected by the loss of Negroponte, Sultan Mehmet's successful invasion gave the Ottoman Turks both control over the sea and a strategic base from which to invade the Italian peninsula. Like Bessarion's Trapezuntine eulogy, the speeches were not originally delivered in any sort of assembly. Bessarion initially sent them to Doge Cristoforo Moro in response to the latter's consolatory letter on the loss of Negroponte. He also

82 Petta (1974: 367–68), *contra* Bianca (1980: 145, n. 169).

83 Pfeiffer (1968: 57): "Aber bei Bessarion war die Vaterlandsliebe größer als die politische Geschicklichkeit".

84 Babinger (1978: 279–84), Miller (1908: 170–79), Setton (1978: 291–93, 298–313).



ILLUSTRATION 4 *Tobias Stimmer, portrait of Cardinal Bessarion. From Paolo Giovio, Elogia virorum literis illustrium (Basle: Petrus Perna, 1577), p. 30. DFG-Projekt CAMENA, Heidelberg-Mannheim.*

included his letter to the abbot of San Severino (in Naples) in the package, but without the most embarrassing passages about the pope.⁸⁵ The *Orationes contra Turcas*, as printed by Guillaume Fichet, consist of three introductory letters, two speeches, and a Latin translation of Demosthenes' *First Olynthiac*.⁸⁶ The two speeches are addressed to the Italians ("Itali"). The first speech is about the imminent dangers of Ottoman expansion for the Italian peninsula, while the second addresses the need to end discord and unite against

85 See here Meserve (2003: 542).

86 The first letter is an introductory letter to Fichet (fol. 3r–3v), the second is a letter to the princes of Italy, explaining the contents of the booklet (fols. 3v–4v), and the third one is addressed to Bessarion of San Severino (fols. 4v–8v).

the Ottomans.⁸⁷ The Latin translation of Demosthenes' speech is preceded by an introductory note and concluded by an epilogue.⁸⁸ Fichet's printing was disseminated among the Christian powers of Europe in copies that had been personalised with decorations as well as poetical compositions.⁸⁹

The absence of Greece in Bessarion's speeches is remarkable not only in view of his own preoccupation with Greece and the freedom of the Greeks elsewhere, but also against the background of how other Byzantines dealt with the crusade in their works. Byzantine intellectuals often presented crusades as a Western obligation to the Greeks. Demetrius Chalcondylas, for example, openly spoke of a "remuneratio", a recompense.⁹⁰ He specifically referred to the sixth-century Gothic Wars, in which the Byzantines (the "Graeci") had restored peace in Italy when it was trampled by the Goths. Since the Greeks had so liberally exerted their energies to rescue Italy—Chalcondylas argued—the Italians had now to recompense Greece and liberate it from the Turks.⁹¹ His

87 The first speech is entitled "Bessarionis Cardinalis ad Italos de periculis imminentibus Oratio" (fols. 8^v–19^r), the second "Eiusdem de discordiis sedandis et bello in Turcum decernendo" (fols. 19^r–32^r).

88 Introduction on fols. 31^v–32^r, translation on fols. 32^v–40^r, epilogue on fols. 40^r–41^r. For quotations, I have used the original 1470-edition of Guillaume Fichet. The only modern edition of the text (based on the 1537-edition of Josse Bade) is by Migne (1866). The glosses to the Demosthenes-translation are not included; they are available in the original edition and in the edition of Geuffroy (1573). Though I cite from Fichet's edition of 1470, I also refer to the edition of Migne as his edition is more widely available. For earlier manuscript redactions of the *Orationes*, see Monfasani (1981 = 1995: 179–81, 196–204). For a thorough analysis of the history of the text, see Meserve (2003).

89 Bessarion's *Orationes contra Turcas* have been discussed in the context of their textual history as well as in the context of their argumentative strategies, yet they have not been critically examined with regard to their self-presentational strategies. See, in descending chronological order, esp. Ricklin (2013), Lentzen (2010: 293–304), Colliard (2004: 103–13), Meserve (2003; 2004: 31–38), Manselli (1973), Binner (1980), Schoebel (1967: 157–60), Vast (1878b: 386–92). A discussion of the *Orationes* is absent in Coluccia (2009). The *Orationes* are further briefly discussed in Monfasani (1981), Mohler (1923: 416–17), Manselli (1973), and Hankins (1995: 117–18).

90 The text of Chalcondylas' speeches is in Geanakoplos (1976: 296–304) (with English translation on pp. 254–64 and discussion on pp. 231–53). On Chalcondylas, see mainly Armando Petrucci's entry in *DBI* s.v. "Calcondila, Demetrio" (with sources and scholarly bibliography up to 1973). The only book-length study regarding his life and work is Cammelli (1954). An assessment of his contribution to Greek learning in Italy is N.G. Wilson (2000: 126–28).

91 Chalcondylas (ed. Geanakoplos 1976: 300 *ad* fol. 6^v). According to Bisaha (2004: 115), Chalcondylas here reminds the Latins "of the unity that once existed between Greek East and Latin West—in this case back when the Italians still acknowledged the Byzantines

reference to early Byzantine history is exceptional. Byzantine Greeks usually relied on classical Greece to make their claims for recompense, though both periods were probably seen as part of Greek antiquity.⁹² The idea was that the European nations owed a cultural debt to the Greeks of their times because the ancient Greeks had significantly contributed to Roman or Latin civilisation, either by their own inventions or by perfecting what they had received from other, even more ancient cultures.⁹³ Bessarion himself had used this argument of cultural debt for different purposes in a Greek context, in his letter to Constantine Palaeologus (see above, pp. 106–07), but his protégé Ianus Lascaris used it for a European audience to galvanise support for a crusade against the Ottoman Turks.

After Bessarion's death, Lascaris came to be seen, and regarded himself, as the ambassador of the Greeks in the Latin West.⁹⁴ In his public writings, he fashioned this role very differently. His arguments in general are more typical of the Greek crusade appeals than Bessarion's. Lascaris delivered his crusade speech as a papal legate, probably at the court of Charles V in Madrid, in about 1525, more than forty years after Bessarion's death. He had the mandate of Pope Clement VII to reconcile Charles with Francis I of France after the battle of Pavia, in order to create the peaceful conditions needed for a crusade. However, Lascaris also used the opportunity to plead the Greek case, and he did so with the argument of cultural debt.⁹⁵ In compliance with crusade rhetoric Lascaris stressed both the necessity and the utility of a crusade against the Turks,⁹⁶ and, as a papal legate, emphasised the need for unity among European

as Romans". However, Chalcondylas made no effort to stress a specifically *Roman* unity between Italians and Byzantines, for he called Byzantium Greece and the Byzantines Greeks, which is in line with the way Italian humanists saw the Byzantines in history (see also Chapter 2, pp. 64–72).

92 Ben-Tov (2013) makes the valid point that German humanists placed the end of Greek antiquity as late as 1453.

93 On the role of the concepts of *inventio/heuresis* and *translatio/mimesis* as well as the idea of inventorship in cultural history from Greco-Roman antiquity to the Italian Renaissance see Atkinson (2007).

94 For Lascaris' preoccupation with the crusade, see Walton (1973) and A. Pontani (1985). For bibliography on Lascaris, see the references in Chapter 5, p. 167, n. 4.

95 If the speech was actually delivered, it was most probably in 1525 (see Whittaker 1977: 89–91; Binner 1980: 177–78). However, it is likely that the text in its present form is a reworking of the original speech (Whittaker 1977: 92). On the complicated text history in general see Whittaker (1977) together with Whittaker (1980) and Nikas (1995: 349–53).

96 I. Lascaris (ed. Nikas 1995: ll. 7–11, 202–05, 426–29).

Christians.⁹⁷ Still, Lascaris' mandate was twofold, as he himself explained to Charles:

For this reason and to this effect I have been sent to you, and this I have to say and I say this to your Highness in the pope's name. But it is not only the pope who sends me, Sire. If I may say something which must not astound Your Highness: ancient Greece and what is left of present-day Greece send me in order to beg you, Sire, to have compassion on them. Ancient Greece, I say—how many excellent men she has produced, men who domesticated the world and adorned it with every virtue and civilisation...⁹⁸

The remainder of Lascaris' argument revolved around the notion of cultural debt. According to him, the nations of Europe had an obligation to the Greek nation and must "recognise Greece as their mother" and commemorate its ancient heroes as their fathers and teachers.⁹⁹ In a long list, he paraded the Greeks' illustrious ancestors with triumph: protagonists of civilisation for whose achievements the Latin West had to repay the Greeks. Lascaris' formulation of Europe's cultural debt to the Greeks reveals an inclusive view on the Greek contribution to Europe, going far beyond the humanist curriculum, and also comprising, for instance, the arts and sciences of legislature, statecraft, medicine, and theology.¹⁰⁰ According to Lascaris, the men of his small

97 I. Lascaris (ed. Nikas 1995: ll. 338–39). Lascaris alludes to the fact that Charles v kept the French king as a captive; the orator advises the emperor to liberate him and to make his own sister the captive's bride in order to secure peace and unity among the Christians (ll. 370–558).

98 "Per questa causa et per questo effecto sono stato mandato qui, et tal cosa ho ad dire et dico ad vostra Serenità ad nome suo; nè solo lui è che mi manda, Syre, ma se ho ad dire cossa che non deve parere strana ad vostra Serenità, mi manda l'antiqua Grecia et le reliquie de la presente ad Supplicarvi, Syre, che li vogliate havere compassione; dico l'antiqua Grecia, quelli grandi homeni che lei ha producto, li quali hanno domesticato et ornato il mondo de ogni virtù et humanità..." (I. Lascaris, ed. Nikas 1995: ll. 113–20). Compare: "Queste cose, Syre, io ho in comissione dal summo Pontifice, et de la patria mia, a Vostra Maestà circa il pregare et supplicare che voglia fare la impresa" (ll. 168–70).

99 "Onde potete, Syre, considerare, essendo iusto estimatore, quanta obligatione hanno tute queste nationi alla natione Greca, che veramente doveriamo riconoscere la Grecia como loro Matre, et havere memoria deli prenominati homini, como de Patri loro, et Preceptori" (I. Lascaris, ed. Nikas 1995: ll. 136–40).

100 The protagonists fall into nine categories: heroes (I. Lascaris, ed. Nikas 1995: ll. 120–21: Heracles, Theseus, Iason), legislators (ll. 122–23: Minos, Lycurgus, Solon), commanders and strategists (ll. 122–23: Themistocles, Aristides, Epaminondas), kings (ll. 123: Agesilaus,

catalogue had given to the inhabitants of Europe their laws, religion, and the customs appropriate to true humans.¹⁰¹ On behalf of the ancient Greeks, Lascaris beseeched Charles to “liberate their fatherland (*patria*), now occupied by a foul and abominable people, so that their inventions and institutions would have their rightful place and domicile (*la propria sede et domicilio*).”¹⁰² With an ill-chosen line from the *Aeneid*, he made them beg the emperor to “grant [them] an enduring home, and to grant secure walls to [their] expelled band.”¹⁰³ Throughout the speech, Lascaris also emphatically identified with the Greeks and underscored his own Greekness. In the very first sentence of his speech he introduced himself as a “Greek nobleman” (“gentilhomogreco”),¹⁰⁴ and also presented himself as a representative and even ambassador of both “ancient Greece and the remnants (*reliquie*) of present-day Greece.”¹⁰⁵

Philip, Alexander), poets and historians (ll. 123–26: Homer, Hesiod, Pindar, Xenophon, Thucydides, Plutarch), philosophers (ll. 126–28: Pythagoras, Plato, Socrates, Aristotle, Theophrastus), geographers (ll. 128–29: Hipparchus, Strabo, Ptolemy), medical authors (l. 129: Hippocrates, Galen), and theologians (ll. 130–31: Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian, John Chrysostom).

101 I. Lascaris (ed. Nikas 1995: ll. 135–36).

102 “Nè pensate, Syre, che questo sia somnio mio o visione, ma vera coniectura che se tutti costoro havessero ad ridurse in un loco et deliberare insieme, facio certa coniectura che mandariano, essendo licito, a Vostra Maestà et fariano questa richiesta che li piacesse liberare la loro patria, occupata da gente fedà, et abominabile, affin che il loro inventi et instituti havessero la propria sede et domicilio, et como sollevano vivi instruire li homini, così per li loro precepti et exepti possino ancora farlo, et non si extingua la loro fama, floria e scientia, como già la è extincta in Grecia, et ne li altri paesi certa ombra sola è restata” (I. Lascaris, ed. Nikas 1995: ll. 139–150).

103 “Da propriam, Rex Magne, domum, da menia pulsus” (I. Lascaris, ed. Nikas 1995: ll. 152–53). The Vergilian hypotext is curious since in the *Aeneid*, the line “Da propriam, Thymbraee, domum, da moenia fessis” (3.85), expressed by Aeneas, continues as follows: “Et genus et mansuram urbem; serva altera Troiae | Pergama, reliquias Danaum atque immitis Achilli.” The Vergilian reference to the Greeks as aggressors is a subtext which Lascaris cannot have intended. Possibly, he took the line from a notebook without checking its original context (e.g. one of his own notebooks with *loci communes* that are listed by A. Pontani 1992c: 372–73, nos. 1–4).

104 “Sacra, Cesarea et Catholica Maestà, io presentai laltro giorno el breve de la santità dil Papa a vostra serenità et dissi sollo ad quella che ero un gentilhommo greco informato et instructo de le cosse di levante . . .” (I. Lascaris, ed. Nikas 1995: ll. 1–4).

105 I. Lascaris (ed. Nikas 1995: ll. 154–68). He explained that he was in contact with the Greeks under Ottoman rule via secret messages, and that they implored the emperor through “us who are in this part of the world” (“per mezo de noi altri che semo in queste parte”, ll. 161–62). Sathas (1869: 88) translated “le *reliquie* di costoro, et de l’antique Grecia” with “οἱ ἀπόγονοι αὐτῶν καὶ τῆς ἀρχαίας Ἑλλάδος” (“the descendants of these men and ancient

In this way, Lascaris created the impression of a continuum, from Hercules and Homer through Chrysostom to the Greeks of his own day. This relationship between himself, the Greeks he represented, and the protagonists of ancient Greece forms the core of his claim of cultural debt.

The contrast with Bessarion's *Orationes contra Turcas* is striking. The cardinal did not single out Greece as a distinctive (ethnic, linguistic, or cultural) entity that must somehow be restored. He rather framed the crusading project as a primarily religious affair in defence of Christendom in general and the Italian peninsula in particular. In the opening lines of the letter to his namesake of San Severino, he deplored the misfortunes of the Christians in general, not those of the Greeks in particular.¹⁰⁶ Similarly, at the end of his first speech to the Italian princes he urged them to expel the enemy so that the liberty of Italy ("libertas Italiae") would be secured.¹⁰⁷ Bessarion equally bemoaned the "Christianorum fortunae, opes, imperia" brought under the Ottoman yoke after the fall of Constantinople. In this context, he listed the inhabitants of his native Trebizond, Sinope, Lesbos, the Peloponnesus, Caria, Cilicia, Mysia, Lower Pannonia, Epirus, Illyria, and Euboea. All these regions had once been part of the Byzantine Empire, but the Byzantine territory as such remained unmentioned. Bessarion mentioned the Greeks in the same breath as the Mysians, the Illyrians, and the Pannonians. From this perspective, the *Graeci* are just one of the many Christian peoples who lost their liberty to the Ottomans. This is also reflected in Bessarion's use of the first person plural: 'we' consistently refers to *us Christians* instead of *us Greeks*.¹⁰⁸ Stress is on the fact that *Christian* blood is being spilt,¹⁰⁹ and the main antithesis is between the addressees ('we') and the Ottomans ('they'), defined primarily on the religious level as dichotomy

Greece") instead of τὰ λείψανα αὐτῶν and thus suppresses the ambivalent meaning of the original "relique" in this context (he uses the unreliable edition of Giovanni Battista Scandella, published in 1848, on which see Whittaker 1980).

106 "Deploranti mihi nuper Christianorum hominum calamitates et acerbissimam Chalcidis Euboicae eversionem, litterae abs te redditae fuerunt..." (Bessarion 1470: fol. 3^v, cf. ed. Migne 1866c: 647–48).

107 Bessarion (1470: fol. 19^r, cf. ed. Migne 1866c: 659).

108 For example, "in hostium nostrorum capita" (Bessarion 1470: fol. 19^r, cf. ed. Migne 1866c: 660), "hostium nostrorum rem" (fol. 21^r, cf. p. 661), "cervicibus nostris imminentem" (fol. 25^v, cf. p. 665), "nostrorum sanguine" (fol. 25^v, cf. p. 665), "nomen nostrorum" (fol. 25^v, p. 665), "nostrorum cadavera" (fol. 26^r, cf. p. 665).

109 See also Bessarion (1470: fol. 7^r, cf. ed. Migne 1866c: 650; fols. 10^v–11^r, p. 653).

between Christians and Muslims, framed as a division between the faithful and the infidel.¹¹⁰ Lascaris, in contrast, referred to the Greeks in the first person plural. When he recalled the rise of Ottoman power, he expressly referred to “what [the Ottoman Turks] undertook against *us Greeks* both on the sea and on land, both in Asia and in Europe” (“quello facevano contra *noi greci* per mare e per terra in Asia et in Europa”, ll. 45–46, emphasis mine).

The only time Cardinal Bessarion took on the persona of a Greek was in his Latin translation of the *First Olynthiac*, which had originally been delivered by Demosthenes in 349 BC in order to admonish the Athenians to check Philip’s expansion by assisting the Olynthians.¹¹¹ Bessarion not only translated the piece, but also made the parallels between past and present as explicit as he could in the prologue “ex auctoritate Demosthenis”, the epilogue, and the marginal notes printed with the translation.¹¹²

It is mainly in the context of Bessarion’s digression on the rise of the Ottoman Turks that he referred to the Byzantine Empire. In Latin fashion, he called it “the empire of the Greeks” (“imperium Graecorum”).¹¹³ Even in this particular

110 “Nulla inter oves et lupos gratia. Nullum inter profanos homines et Christianos ius amicitiae est. Non donis, non muneribus pacatur hostis immanis, barbarus. Nulla foederis religione tenetur perfidus, non movetur misericordia crudelissimus. Dominari, praeesse, imperare cupit; cruore et flamma cuncta delere vult. Subiugare sibi cunctos studet” [*There is no love between sheep and wolves. There is no right of friendship between profane people and Christians. The inhuman, barbarian enemy is not pacified by presents nor by gifts. The perfidious man is not bound by the obligation of the covenant, the most cruel man is not moved by compassion. He rather desires to dominate, to rule, to command; he wants to destroy everything with bloodshed and blazing fire. He aims at subjugating all men to him*] (Bessarion 1470: fol. 7^v, cf. ed. Migne 1866c: 650).

111 It seems that Bessarion’s translation is fairly literal, even though it clearly has its own emphases. For example, on fol. 31^r the Cardinal rendered the Greek “τὴν πόλιν” of Demosthenes 1.5.17 with the more emotive “patria” as if the original had πατρίς.

112 “Ita enim tum Graeciae Philippus imminebat, ut nunc Turcus Italiae. Substineat igitur Philippus Turci personam, Itali Atheniensium, nos Demosthenis. Iam facile intelliges totam orationem causae nostrae convenire” [*In the same way as in those days Philip threatened all of Greece, so the Turk now threatens Italy. May Philip therefore take the role of the Turk, the Italians that of the Athenians, and we that of Demosthenes. You will easily understand that the whole speech fits our cause*] (Bessarion 1470: fol. 30^r).

113 The Byzantine emperor was called “imperator Graecorum” (cf. Bessarion, ed. Mohler 1942c: 564). In the second speech to the Italian princes, he refers to the cruelties suffered by the inhabitants of Constantinople, called “Bizantini” (Bessarion 1470: fol. 26^r, cf. ed. Migne 1866c: 665).

context, however, the cardinal did not openly identify with the Greeks of the empire, or what they suffered due to the Ottoman Turks. Instead, he critically evaluated Greek history. He was not only critical of the role played by the Greeks in the westward expansion of the Ottomans into Europe, but also explicitly presented Greece as a *negative* example to the West. In the second speech to the Italian princes, dealing with the necessity of uniting the Christians against the Ottomans, he claimed that the dissolution of the Byzantine Empire had ultimately been due to Greek internal discord. “Nothing but discord destroyed miserable Greece”, Bessarion claimed, “nothing but civil war annihilated this part of the world—and not only in our own memory, but also in ancient times”. To illustrate his point, he evoked the example of Philip of Macedon, who was able to overturn Greece precisely because of the mutual hatred of Athenians, Spartans, Thebans, and the other Greek peoples.¹¹⁴ He thus placed the demise of Byzantium, the Roman Empire of the East, in the context of ancient Greek history.

Throughout the *Orationes* as well as in the marginal notes to his translation of Demosthenes, Bessarion laid particular emphasis on the idea of *libertas* that was also central to his Trapezuntine eulogy.¹¹⁵ Even so, the freedom Bessarion defended in his Turkish orations was not the freedom he had inherited from the ancient Greeks. In the context of his orations, *libertas* meant either Italian freedom or Christian *libertas* in the sense of “fidei integritas”, to recall his own formulation in his speech on St. Andrew: the unity of all Christians threatened by Islam. Although this freedom was not an inheritance from the ancient Greeks, it was threatened by an enemy similar to that which menaced Hellenic freedom, viz. a barbarian enemy of the East. Bessarion reformulated the firm dichotomy between Hellenes and barbarians of his *Encomium* as a dichotomy

114 “Nihil aliud miseram extinxit Graeciam nisi discordia, nihil aliud eam orbis partem delet nisi bella civilia neque solum nostra memoria sed etiam priscis temporibus. Nam Philippus, Amyntae filius, Alexandri magni pater, per Atheniensium, Lacedaemoniorum, Thebanorum aliorumque mutua odia Graeciam evertit” [*Nothing else extinguished miserable Greece than discord, nothing else obliterated this part of the world than civil war, and not only in our own time, but also in the remote past. For Philip, the son of Amyntas, the father of Alexander the Great, destroyed Greece due to the mutual hatred of the Athenians, the Lacedaemonians, the Thebans, and others*] (Bessarion 1470: fols. 21^v–22^r, cf. ed. Migne 1866c: 662). Note that in the next lines, Bessarion added a positive example from Greek history, where cooperation led to a victory over the aggressor, namely during the Peloponnesian War.

115 Bessarion (1470: fols. 31^r, 34^v, 36^r).

between Christians and barbarians in his *Orationes*. In this way, he grafted the opposition of Christians versus non-Christians onto that between Hellenes versus barbarians.

This leaves the question of *why* Bessarion, very much unlike Ianus Lascaris and others, so conspicuously left out all references to his Greekness. Part of an explanation resides in his position as a Greek cardinal.¹¹⁶ True, Bessarion's Greekness sometimes contributed to his social and political prominence. In Rome, and especially under Pope Pius II, his Greek presence could be used in order to underscore not only ecclesiastical union but also Roman supremacy. This consideration was probably behind the cardinal's prominent role in the ceremony surrounding the transfer of Saint Andrew's relics (see above, p. 112). The Venetians could, moreover, interpret Bessarion's presence in their city as a *carte blanche* to claim former Byzantine territories or Greek areas in the East.¹¹⁷ Nevertheless, his Greekness also contributed negatively to his position, especially at the Curia.¹¹⁸

As a highly-placed member of the Roman Church, Bessarion needed first and foremost to promote the Holy War against the infidel, not the liberation of his fatherland. He explained this himself in a letter to the Venetian doge that he wrote roughly two months after the fall of Constantinople. In this letter, the cardinal repeatedly stated that he wanted to avoid the impression that he was preoccupied with his fatherland ("patria") rather than the cause of the Christians under Ottoman rule.¹¹⁹ Bessarion added that, as a cardinal, he was in the position

116 The primary importance of Bessarion's ecclesiastical position also appears from his personal *curriculum vitae*, written on the first page of his *Horologion* (BNM, Marc. Gr. 14, fol. 1^r), where he summed up the stages of his ecclesiastical career, from his acceptance of the monastic habit in 1423 until his elevation to cardinal in 1440. The note is printed with a French translation by Saffrey (1964: 270–72). See also the prologue to BNM, Marc. Gr. 533 which constitutes a collection of *iuvēnilia* (see also above, p. 96, with n. 14). In this text, too, Bessarion stressed his ecclesiastical career. He also stated that he was a Trapezuntine by birth, while he was nourished and educated in Constantinople: "... τοῦνομα βησσαρίωνι, τὸ γένος ἐκ τραπεζοῦντος, ἐν κωνσταντινουπόλει τραφέντι καὶ παιδευθέντι" (cited from Bessarion, ed. Saffrey 1964: 283). See also Rigo (1994: 34).

117 Kourniakos (2013: 455).

118 See Henderson (2013: 113) and Kourniakos (2013: 455–56).

119 Bessarion (ed. Mohler 1942c: 475, ll. 1–12; 476, ll. 12–17).

... to beg for help freely, not for the benefit of my fatherland, not for that of my city, but for the sake of all-round safety, for the honour of the Christians. In this position, I was able to explain to many men how great a danger threatens Italian interests, not to speak of the interests of others, if the advance of the most savage barbarians is not halted.¹²⁰

The reasons why Bessarion wanted to avoid this impression can be gauged from a specific episode of his ecclesiastical career that gave him good reason to dissimulate his Greekness in the *Orationes*. After the death of Pope Nicholas v in 1455, his attempt to win the papal election had failed. If we give credence to the account of Enea Silvio Piccolomini, the cardinal of Avignon had obstructed Bessarion's election with aggressive reference to the candidate's Greek background, concluding that he would never accept a Greek as pope.¹²¹ After the attack, the Greek cardinal lost his majority of votes in the Curia and found himself with less power than before. By the time Bessarion wrote his *Orationes*, almost fifteen years later, he therefore had good reasons to be very cautious in displaying his personal commitment to the Greek world and probably felt the need to overcome the suspicion that he, as a Greek, was defending Greek interests.¹²²

In 1470, when Fichtel published the *Orationes*, Bessarion was still considered a very serious candidate for the papacy, especially by Venice, and it is no coincidence that he originally sent his orations to the doge. Bessarion's relation with the Serenissima had always been close, in particular after his crusade legation there in 1463–66, and he regarded the city as a “second Byzantium” (“alterum Byzantium”) and his “home” (“patria”).¹²³ Holding several benefices in Venetian territories,¹²⁴ Bessarion was the most strenuous supporter in the Sacred College of the large-scale crusade that the Venetians deemed necessary

120 “Mihi vero data est facultas libere implorandi auxilium, non iam pro patria, non pro civitatis meae salute, sed pro tutela omnium, pro Christi gloria, pro Christianae fidei conservatione, pro Christianorum honore. Quo in loco pluribus exponere poteram, quantum periculi immineat Italicis rebus, ne de reliquis dicam, nisi truculentissimi barbari impetus comprimentur” (Bessarion, ed. Mohler 1942c: 476, ll. 12–17).

121 Piccolomini (ed. Van Heck 1984: I, 43; ed. Totaro 1984: I, 154; ed. Meserve and Simonetta 2003: 140).

122 Cf. Kourniakos (2013: 450–51).

123 See Bessarion's letter to Doge Cristoforo Moro and the Senate of 31 May 1468 (Bessarion, ed. Mohler 1942c: 542).

124 Bessarion held benefices in San Stefano delle Pinne in Split (1443–72), San Giovanni Evangelista in Ravenna (1443–72), and San Pietro di Villanova in Vicenza (1449?–68, pension until 1472) (Henderson 2013: 115–16).

to protect their holdings in the Levant. By sending his orations to the doge, the cardinal sent a very clear message of commitment: if he ever became pope, he would use his influence to establish the *liga generalis* that the Venetians wanted. As Venice found the efforts of Pope Paul II to organise a crusade utterly insufficient,¹²⁵ Bessarion's message was very timely, and it might well be that Paul's failing attempts to galvanise support inspired his more independent and senatorial attitude regarding the crusade.¹²⁶ His appeal bore fruit. When Paul II died in July 1471, the Venetian senate actively lobbied for Bessarion's election as pope, but in vain.¹²⁷

The image Bessarion created for himself in the *Orationes* seems to reflect his concerns and ambitions at this period. In the texts, he represented himself expressly, first, as a committed leader of the Roman Church, and secondly, as an unbiased observer of history. In the heading of his address to Fichet, therefore, his ecclesiastical dignities feature prominently: "Bessarion, Bishop of Sabinus, Cardinal, Patriarch of Constantinople, [Bishop] of Nicaea".¹²⁸ Moreover, in his introductory letter to Bessarion of San Severino, he called his namesake as a witness to the fact that he had predicted the calamities of Christendom as soon as he had heard that Constantinople had fallen into Ottoman hands in 1453. In this context, Bessarion insisted that his foresight had not been caused by extraordinary sagacity or some sort of prophetic fury. The situation had rather been perfectly clear "for all who were exempt from private concerns and feelings".¹²⁹

The idea that Bessarion's crusading appeals remained without success because his patriotic zeal eclipsed his political deftness seems to be unjustified. If anything, Bessarion did his best to appeal to the general concerns of

125 Setton (1978: 308–09).

126 Henderson (2013: 81–82, 112).

127 Setton (1978: 312–13).

128 "Bessarion episcopus Sabiensis, cardinalis, patriarcha Constantinopolitanus Nicaenus" (Bessarion 1470: fol. 3^r).

129 "Tu es mihi testis, quom Bononiae essemus (...) atque allatus esset infelicissimus ille de urbis Bizantinae excidio nuntius, ea omnia, quae postea consecuta sunt, me futura praedixisse, non ea sane de causa, quod vel prudentia excellenti vel divinationis furore aliquo despicerem quae alii non cernerent, sed quod omnibus qui privatis studiis et affectibus vacui essent, ea omnia palam erant et in promptu" [*You are my witness that when we were in Bologna (...) and this most infelicitous message about the fall of Constantinople arrived, I foretold all things that would happen next, not for the reason that I can observe things others cannot see through my extraordinary sagacity or some sort of prophetic fury, but because these things were clearly visible for all who were exempt from private concerns and feelings*] (Bessarion 1470: fol. 6^r, cf. Migne 1866c: 649–50).

his audience instead of the interests of himself or the Greeks. The fact that he de-emphasised his Greekness when writing on this topic is in line with the cultural sensibility characterising his diplomatic *modus operandi* in general. When Bessarion discussed the possible reasons for Greek misery under Ottoman rule in his encyclical letter, for example, he explicitly rejected the idea that God had punished the Greeks because of their sins. In morals and honesty of life, he wrote to his fellow Hellenes, “our people is inferior to none and superior over some”. In the Latin translation of the text, intended for a Latin audience, we read exactly the same—except for the crucial “ἔστι δ’ ὢν καὶ βελτίους”, a subtle but significant omission.¹³⁰ This shows that the audience determined not only the language of Bessarion’s message but also its nuances.

The Limits of Freedom: Hellenic Panhellenism?

Bessarion’s preoccupation with Hellenic freedom and the hoped-for crusade prompts questions about how the cardinal thought about the future of his liberated fatherland. We have seen that he recognised the fact that the Greeks lived in various political contexts, but did he really intend to unite the Greeks under a Greek king, as did Laonikos Chalkokondyles? Did he envision the liberated Greeks in a world divided into various Latin kingdoms and principalities? If this question has been raised at all, it has also been suggested that Bessarion envisioned the political restoration of the Roman Empire in the East (“Rhomäerreich”).¹³¹ A similar argument has been made for Ianus Lascaris. Both Bessarion and Lascaris addressed the Latin West and urged the Latin Christians to join forces and liberate the Greeks. According to one modern historian, Lascaris was so appalled at the idea of a Latin Empire that for

130 Compare “siquidem et dictum est, et vere dictum est, ut arbitror, nostros in iis quae ad mores et vitae honestatem pertinent nullis esse inferiores” (Bessarion, ed. Migne 1866a: 482) with “εἰρηται γὰρ δὴ, καὶ ἀληθῶς εἰρηται, τὰ γ’ ἐν τοῖς ἡθεσι τοὺς ἡμετέρους μηθένων εἶναι χείρους, ἔστι δ’ ὢν καὶ βελτίους” (col. 453). In the Latin text, Bessarion also says in the third person plural that “the Greeks departed from the truth of the faith” (“Graeci . . . ab intemerata fidei veritate secesserunt”), while in the Greek text he states that (among other things) “the division from the Catholic Church was for us the mother of all these calamities” (“ἡ ἀπὸ τῆς καθολικῆς Ἐκκλησίας διαίρεσις τῶν συμφορῶν τούτων ἡμῖν ἐχρημάτισε μήτηρ”).

131 Binner (1980: 4).

him the restoration of the Greek Empire was the only viable option.¹³² It is, however, imperative not to attach too much weight to the scant evidence we have for both Bessarion's and Lascaris' views on the political future of Greece. As we have seen, there is evidence that Bessarion wanted to restore some kind of political freedom for the Greeks. In the same vein, he also defended Palaeologan claims to Greek territories against Latin claims.¹³³ However, this does not show how the cardinal actually envisioned the governance of a Greek territory after a successful crusade.

Several passages from Bessarion have been alleged to prove that he was pre-occupied with achieving political autonomy for the Greeks and really intended a true restoration of the Greek empire.¹³⁴ If we look closely, however, these passages do not reveal anything decisive about Bessarion's views on the future of his fatherland and produce more questions than conclusive answers about what the cardinal really envisioned in terms of political restoration. In a letter to Pope Pius II, written after his mission to Venice in 1463, Bessarion prophesied that the "pristina libertas" of his fatherland would be restored, a term he also put into the mouth of Saint Andrew in a speech delivered a year earlier (on which see above, p. 112).¹³⁵ Additionally, Bessarion claimed that the "natio Graeca" had lost its "imperium" in his *Encyclica* (1463). This has been taken to imply that he wanted to restore the lost freedom and the empire of the Greek people.¹³⁶ But more questions emerge. What was this "natio Graeca" that had apparently possessed one single "imperium"? As Bessarion himself had experienced, the Hellenes had been dispersed over many polities and territorial realms even before 1453. How did he conceptualise this "imperium" geographically and politically? Moreover, what did "pristina libertas" mean for Bessarion? Did it refer to the Greeks under the Roman (read Byzantine) Empire, or to the Greek world before it was conquered by the Macedonians and later incorporated into the Roman Empire? As we have seen,

132 Binner (1980: 237): "... eine Lösung analog der von 1204 hätte er als persönliche Schmach empfunden und mußte schon von daher die Wiedererrichtung der griechischen Kaisermacht fordern".

133 So, for instance, in 1462, Bessarion intervened with the pope in order to avoid Thomas Palaeologus' losing Monemvasia to an Italian governor (see Bessarion, ed. Mohler 1942c: 509).

134 Binner (1980: 235–36).

135 Bessarion (ed. Mohler 1942c: 526).

136 "Nunc vero (heu infelicem, et miseram patriae nostrae conditionem) non modo principatum, atque imperium orbis amisimus, verum etiam servitutem patimur" (Bessarion, ed. Migne 1886a: 481).

Bessarion regarded the Hellenes as an ethno-cultural community capable of surviving in different political contexts. Even though he referred to the restoration of the Greek “*corporum libertas*” and “*pristina libertas*”, he never really imagined the ethno-cultural community of Hellenes in one single body politic as did Laonikos Chalkokondyles or, much later, Giovanni Gemisto, whose vision of Greece will be discussed in Chapter 7.¹³⁷

As experienced diplomats, both Bessarion and Lascaris must have thought about the future of their fatherland in nuanced ways. Western powers were chiefly interested in their own territorial expansion or in the recovery and maintenance of their colonies in the Greek-speaking world, but not in the establishment of an autonomous and unified Greek state.¹³⁸ Since both Bessarion and Lascaris were well-informed about the concerns and interests of the parties with potential ambitions in the East, it is unlikely that they sincerely thought a crusade would restore an Eastern Roman Empire to the Greeks or a homogeneously Greek kingdom of the kind Chalkokondyles had in mind. In conjunction with this, neither Bessarion nor Lascaris thought of the West as a threat to the integrity of their γένος or *natio* in the way the Byzantine Romans of the thirteenth century had done. The religious hostilities that had troubled the relations between Byzantines and Latins in the aftermath of the Fourth Crusade were largely irrelevant to the Byzantine intelligentsia in Italy, since they sympathised with the Union of the Churches if they were not converts like Bessarion. The real enemies were the Ottoman Turks.

If we look at Bessarion's views on Greco-Latin relations as well as his ideas on Hellenic freedom, there is no reason to assume that he would have rejected the idea of a Latin protectorate for the Greeks. During his sojourn in Venice in the period 1463–66, the cardinal adopted the name “Bessarion Venetus” instead of the more usual “Bessarion Nicaenus”. As John Monfasani has argued, in so doing he “showed that he . . . had identified himself with any future Venetian hegemony. As patriarch of Constantinople, he would embody in his very person and name the new Greco-Venetian Greece promised by the crusade”.¹³⁹

137 Beck (1960: 88–89) rejected the notion that Bessarion favoured the idea of a national Greek state in his letter to Constantine Palaeologus. Indeed, Bessarion depicted the despot not as a national king of the Hellenes, but as a Roman imperialist who would regain his rights in Asia and liberate Europe with the help of the Peloponnesians. Ronchey (1994: 49), by contrast, supposes that, under the influence of Plethon, Bessarion entirely abandoned the ideal of a universal Roman empire ruled from Constantinople and adopted the ideal of Hellenic autonomy, centred on the Despotate of the Morea (cf. Pertusi 1968).

138 Cf. Kourniakos (2013: 451–52).

139 See Monfasani (1986: 132–36), with Kourniakos (2013: 462–63). For the relation between Bessarion and Venice, see Ronchey (2008b) and Köster (2010).

Sympathy for the Venetians was not exceptional among the Greeks during the Venetian-Ottoman war (1463–79), when large parts of the Greek-speaking population seem to have sided with the Venetians rather than the Ottomans.¹⁴⁰ More generally, Bessarion repeatedly insisted upon the importance of closer collaboration between the Latin West and the Greek East. Before the fall of Constantinople, he had not only proposed sending young Hellenes to Italy in order to learn (see p. 106 above), but also advised young Greek men to marry Catholic girls.¹⁴¹ It seems Bessarion firmly believed that Greeks could live as Greeks in a Latin-dominated world: his Trapezuntine ancestors had proved that the Hellenes were perfectly capable of maintaining their precious freedom of “ψυχῇ” and “γνώμῃ” even when surrounded by barbarians.¹⁴²

In his works, Bessarion designed a very ‘resistant’ kind of Greekness that was immune even to the presence of barbarians. His notion of Greekness was not just a means of forging a personal genealogy or glorifying the prestige of his native city, but formed the basis for a wider Hellenic community based on shared language, origin and history, and innate character. This community resisted the cultural, dynastic, and territorial fragmentation of the Greek world as it existed both shortly before and after the fall of Constantinople, the Morea, and Trebizond. As such, Bessarion’s Greekness can be understood as an attempt to forge a sense of communal belonging that would be able to survive the decline and fall of the Byzantine world. It also entailed a set of values that Bessarion saw as traditionally Hellenic, mainly the maintenance of Hellenic freedom. He regarded the struggle to preserve freedom, both politically and spiritually, as an important feature of the Greek community from ancient times until his own time. In this way, he placed his own efforts to promote Greek freedom in an ancient tradition, and his notion of Hellenic freedom in particular gives coherence to his efforts to help fellow Greeks and to conserve Greek learning after the fall of Constantinople. At the same time, however, his role as protector of the Greeks and perpetuator of the Greek heritage sat uneasily with his role as a Roman cardinal. Therefore, in his Latin works, written from the vantage point of a Church official and for a non-Greek audience, he played down his secular concerns for the Hellenes. In this, he differed from all other Byzantine Greeks in Italy: they normally stressed their connection

140 See here Stefec (2010b: 356) with references.

141 Kourniakos (2013: 452–53).

142 But also see Lauritzen (2011: 157) who points out that Bessarion was proud that Trebizond had not been conquered by the Latins during the Fourth Crusade.

with the ancient Greeks and even presented themselves as ambassadors of Greece, as did Ianus Lascaris in his crusade appeal.

In the next chapter, I will examine the Hellenism of George Trapezuntius of Crete. While Bessarion's Hellenism has been remarked even where it was most conspicuously absent, Trapezuntius' Hellenism has often been downplayed in spite of the overwhelming evidence of its importance to his thought. A re-examination of his works conclusively shows that in many ways ancient Greece was as central to his eccentric thought as it was to Bessarion's, even though they represented the role of the Hellenes in past and present in very different and sometimes even opposing ways.

The Greek Tradition as a Combat Zone: Hellenocentrism in the Work of George Trapezuntius of Crete

Greece is both the mother of the civilised world and the origin of worldwide moral decline. Its language spread the evil message of paganism all over the world, but also prepared it for the word of God. It produced evil monsters such as Plato and Theodore Gazes, but also paragons of human genius like Aristotle and Isidore of Kiev. The Greeks dwelt both on the highest peaks of civilisation and in the deepest caves of immorality.

These statements do not reflect the conflicting beliefs and opinions of quarrelling Byzantines. They are the opinions of one man, George Trapezuntius of Crete.¹ He was the first prominent Byzantine scholar to settle in Italy after Manuel Chrysoloras, in 1416.² At the invitation of Francesco Barbaro he first settled in Venice, but from there moved on to Vicenza, Rome, and Naples. From his early twenties until his death in 1473 he worked as translator, teacher, writer of wide-ranging humanist texts, and prophet. His Italian life was dominated by some famous quarrels, not only with Andrea Agaso, whom he believed to be

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- 1 About Greece, for example: "...Graecia, bonorum morum domicilium scientiarumque patria, militiae columen, vere in Christum pietatis certissimum specimen..." [*the home of good customs, the fatherland of the sciences, the summit of warfare, and a model of Christian piety*] (Trapezuntius 1523: fol. Ti^v, with Monfasani 1984k: 406, §107). On Plato, Aristotle, and Gemistos Plethon, see below. On Isidore of Kiev, see Trapezuntius (1523: fol. Qii^v). On Alexander's empire as part of the *praeparatio evangelica*, see below. On the Greeks at the top and in decline, for example: "Quare sicut apud alias gentes pauciores semper boni fuerunt, plures mali, sic apud Graecos plures pessimi omnium, pauciores sublimiore virtute quam natura hominum patitur, fuisse compertum est" (see Trapezuntius 1523: fol. Qi^v, with fols. Pv^r and Pvi^r). In his address to Pope Nicholas v (*Ad defendenda pro Europa Hellesponti claustra*), Trapezuntius is quite clear that the Greeks had deserved their destruction (Trapezuntius, ed. Monfasani 1984m: 437, §§10–11).
 - 2 Monfasani (1976) provides a biography of Trapezuntius with a study of his logic and rhetoric. Monfasani (1984a) offers an overview of the 447 manuscripts that contain his work and provides editions of his works. For an overview of his life and works with an extensive bibliography of relevant sources and scholarship until 1998, see the entry of Paolo Viti in *DBI* s.v. "Giorgio da Trebisonda". Additional bibliography can be found in Jonathan Harris' entry in *EGHT* s.v. "George of Trebizond". See also n. 6 below.

Guarino, but also with Aurispa and Poggio Bracciolini.³ Trapezuntius greatly contributed to the increasing knowledge of ancient Greek literature, especially via his translations into Latin, but he is best known for his rhetorical magnum opus, the first systematic rhetorical handbook of the humanist age, and for his polemical comparison of Aristotle and Plato in the Aristotle-Plato controversy.⁴

Trapezuntius' case is a telling example of how modern viewpoints have coloured our interpretation of the ways in which Byzantine intellectuals viewed their own relation with the Greek world. Because of his early move to Italy, his conversion to the Roman church (probably in the early 1420s), and his fluency in Latin, it has been argued that after he settled in Italy he cut ties with his fatherland and felt himself to be a Latin rather than a Greek. In this interpretation, his Greekness was a rhetorical construct deployed to attract the benevolence of his fellow Greeks.⁵ This impression has been fuelled by the fact that in the later years of his life, Trapezuntius addressed several dedications and treatises to Mehmet the Conqueror, inviting him to pursue world dominion, which contradicts Bessarion's approach and sits uneasily with modern notions of Greek patriotism as well.⁶

This chapter revises the idea that ancient Greece was only of minor importance in Trapezuntius' world view. It first presents in some detail how he used the Greek identifier in various works as a social mark: to position himself in relation to others and *vice versa* and to motivate interpersonal behaviour and commitments. To give more substance to the argument that Trapezuntius by no means abandoned his Greekness in Italy, I will subsequently illustrate the

3 See Monfasani (1976: 109–11). The amusing suggestion that Trapezuntius fought a pugilistic battle in the theatre of Pompey (Shepherd 1837: 114) must be a misinterpretation of Valla's Latin text (cited in Monfasani 1976: 109, n. 71). See also Cessi (1921).

4 Here as elsewhere I follow Monfasani's (1976: 5) suggestion to call George of Trebizond George Trapezuntius of Crete, Trapezuntius for short.

5 Irmscher (1964: 362–63).

6 In the wake of John Monfasani's pioneering monograph on Trapezuntius, his career, especially his rhetoric, has received ample attention. Monfasani has enormously contributed to the accessibility of his works by not only offering many of them in critical editions, but also by locating over 400 manuscripts and editions containing his works. See apart from Monfasani (1976) on Trapezuntius' rhetoric also more recently, in descending chronological order, Calboli Montefusco (2010, 2008, 2003), Merino Jerez (2007a, 2007b), Guerra (2004), Cox (2003), Grau (2003), Hinojo (2000), Mañas Núñez (2000), Classen (1993), D'Ascia (1989), and Monfasani (1983b). On other aspects of his work and thought see, most recently, Steiris (2012, 2011, 2010, 2009), Ruocco (2003), and A. Pontani (1992a). Abenstein (2014) offers a detailed study of Trapezuntius' translation of Basil the Great, commissioned by Cardinal Bessarion.

central role of ancient Greece in his thought by reconstructing the complex way he looked at the Greeks in history. Although he was among the first humanists who wrote about writing history,⁷ he did not write a history of the Greeks himself. Still, we may gauge Trapezuntius' views on the Greek tradition from a polemical work of philosophy, namely his *Comparatio philosophorum Aristotelis et Platonis* (ca. 1458, printed in 1523), which is also the main source for the paradoxes cited at the beginning of this chapter.⁸ The *Comparatio* reads more as a rhetorical invective in a series of essayistic comparisons between Aristotle and Plato than as a stringent and linear philosophical argument.⁹ Completed by the time Laonikos Chalkokondyles was writing his *Histories*, Trapezuntius' treatise voices a very different view of Greek history. Unlike Chalkokondyles (who, as a historian at least, was indifferent to religious questions), Trapezuntius incorporated the Greeks from Lycurgus to Bessarion into a thoroughly Christian (if idiosyncratic) vision of providential history. He differed from both Chalkokondyles and Bessarion in that he did not directly rely on ancient Greek models and templates to articulate his vision of the role of the Greeks in the world. By reconstructing Trapezuntius' views on the Greeks in history, this chapter adds a more eccentric way for Byzantine scholars in Italy to represent the role of the Greeks in history. Like Chalkokondyles, Trapezuntius, in his *Comparatio*, is deeply critical of the Greeks, but at the same time places them at the very centre of his worldview, combining Hellenocentrism with Hellenocriticism.¹⁰ The chapter further substantiates Monfasani's repeated observation that Trapezuntius did not discard his Hellenism but was a Greek patriot in his own right.¹¹

7 See Trapezuntius (ed. Merino Jerez 2007) for an edition, Spanish translation, and concise study of this section from his rhetorical handbook.

8 I will focus on his *Comparatio* and the works most intimately connected with its central argument. These are the slightly earlier criticism of Gazes' translation of Aristotle's *Problemata* (his treatise *Adversus Theodorum Gazam*) and the later letter to Bessarion about the cardinal's response to the *Comparatio* (his famous *In calumniatorem Platonis*, tacitly directed against Trapezuntius). For Trapezuntius' *Comparatio*, I have used the Venetian 1523-edition (entitled the *Comparationes phylosophorum Aristotelis et Platonis*) by De Leuco. John Monfasani is preparing an edition with English translation of the entire work (Monfasani 2008: 4, n. 20).

9 Cf. Monfasani (2008: 15). Even though it was composed in Latin, Trapezuntius' *Comparatio* did not reach a wide Latin audience. See on its reception Monfasani (2008).

10 For Hellenocriticism and Hellenocentrism in the work of Laonikos, see Kaldellis (2014: 188–205).

11 Monfasani (1976: 22, 80, 128–31, 136).

The Greekness of George Trapezuntius of Crete

The dominant view of Trapezuntius' Hellenism has long been that, after his move to Italy, he denied his relationship with his Greek homeland and abandoned his Hellenism. Trapezuntius indeed professed that his Greek was not good and emphasised that he felt alienated from his fellow Greeks as they strayed away from the Roman Church.¹² Writing as a Roman Catholic, Trapezuntius could use the word *Graeci* conventionally to denote the adversaries of the *Latini* or *Catholici*.¹³ Moreover, he mostly signed his work "Georgius Trapezuntius Cretensis", stressing his Trapezuntine and Cretan backgrounds.¹⁴ In his preface to the *Isagoge* of Ptolemy's *Almagest* (1465–66), he specified that he was "a Trapezuntine by ancestry (ἐκ τῶν προγόνων), but a Cretan by birth (γεννήσει) and upbringing (ἀνατροφῇ)".¹⁵ According to his own account, he never reminisced about Trebizond, since he believed man is naturally most

- 12 "Νῦν δὲ Ἑλληνικῶς γράφω, καίτοι γε μὴ καλῶς ἔχων τὸν Ἑλληνα λόγον" (Trapezuntius, ed. Migne 1866: 896 = ed. Monfasani 1984f: 283). Maybe this was only a *topos* of modesty appropriate for an expatriate Greek from Venetian Crete addressing the emperor in the centre of Byzantine Hellenism. In an oration for the papal court in Bologna (1437), Trapezuntius (ed. Monfasani 1984i: 351–52, §§2–3) told his audience that he was vexed by the Greeks because of their aversion to the Roman Church. He emphasised this sense of dissociation elsewhere as well. In a letter to Eugenius IV (1436), for example, he said that although he was born to Greek parents, he ultimately did not follow their erroneous beliefs (Trapezuntius, ed. Monfasani 1984c: 196, §13). Elsewhere, Trapezuntius (ed. Monfasani 1984c: 193, §1) expressed his hope that "his people" would be soon reunited with the Roman Church.
- 13 See, e.g., Trapezuntius (ed. Monfasani 1984m: 437, §12). Elsewhere Trapezuntius used the word *Graecus* in the restricted sense of Orthodox, especially in opposition to the Latin Christians (ed. Monfasani 1984c, 1984e, 1984h, 1984m *passim*). In a letter to Ioannes de Dominicis, Trapezuntius (ed. Monfasani 1984e: 266, §21) mentions the Greeks among the Armenians, Syrians or "Iacobitae", and Ethiopians. In Greek, Trapezuntius (ed. Monfasani 1984p: 529; ed. Monfasani 1984q: 570) used Γραῖκος. It seems that at least once polemics induced him to present Greekness and Christianity as mutually exclusive: "nemo est Graecus qui Christianus esse arbitretur" (ed. Mohler 1942: 303). Monfasani (1984a: 416 *ad* 303.2) corrected Mohler's reading "Christianus" into "Christianos".
- 14 The traditional idea that Trapezuntius was ashamed of his Cretan background (preferring his remote Trapezuntine origin instead) can be discarded with certainty. See here Monfasani (1967: 5).
- 15 "Γεωργίου τοῦ Τραπεζουντίου ἐκ τῶν προγόνων Κρητὸς δὲ τῇ γεννήσει τε καὶ ἀνατροφῇ..." (Trapezuntius, ed. Monfasani 1984f: 283). Not unimportantly, the title is autographic (cf. the app. crit. in Trapezuntius, ed. Monfasani 1984f: 283 *ad loc.*).

attached to his place of birth. "I apparently never see that Pontic city in my dreams, nor some Cappadocian monster", Trapezuntius claimed, "but I very often dream of the walls of my Cretan city, where I was born, its gates, its market, its churches, its harbour, its houses, both when I am awake and in my sleep".¹⁶ Crete, then, was his personal "patria", associated with the main events of his life (birth, education, marriage, and fatherhood), as he emphasised not only in his *Comparatio*, but also in his autobiographical digression in one of his astrological treatises:

I think that it escapes nobody of those who know me that I am a Greek (*Graecus*) and that I was born in Crete—where I married my wife and begot children—and that I have strayed for almost thirty five years now among alien nations against my will and far from my fatherland. Who would volunteer to leave behind the fatherland where he was born, educated, married his wife, and begot his children?¹⁷

This passage also shows that Trapezuntius regarded himself as a Greek, besides being Trapezuntine and, especially, Cretan. He saw Greece ("*Graecia*") as his fatherland ("*patria*") besides Crete,¹⁸ and referred to the Greeks as "his people" ("*gens*", "*genus*", "*natio*"), proudly styling himself "*Graecus*" on multiple occasions, despite his clear sense of alienation from the Greek community and the hostility he had experienced in Greece.¹⁹ Trapezuntius' own insistence on

16 "Audivi ego a parente meo proavum suum ex Trapezunta nescio qua Ponti urbe in Cretam migrasse, nunquam ponticam urbem illam, aut Cappadociae monstrum aliquid videre somnio visus sum, at urbis Cretensis, ubi natus sum, saepius moenia, portas, forum, templa, portum, aedes et dormiens et vigilans somnio" (Trapezuntius 1523: fol. Ri^r–Ri^v; cf. fol. Siii^r–Siii^v).

17 "Neminem, credo, fugit eorum qui me norunt Graecum me esse et in insula Creta natum atque inde uxore ducta simul cum ipsa et liberis iam triginta quinque ferme annis per alienas nationes proculque a patria invitum errare. Quis enim patriam ubi natus, ubi educatus, unde uxorem duxit, ubi suos habet liberos libens relinqueret?" (Trapezuntius, ed. Monfasani 1976: 341).

18 Trapezuntius (ed. Monfasani 1984k: 406–07, §§105–10) apostrophised Greece as his "patria". Trapezuntius (ed. Monfasani 1984i: 357, §26) also expressed a geographical idea of Greece, yet without specifying it ("ex Italia . . . ad totam Graeciam").

19 "gens nostra" (Trapezuntius 1523: fol. Qi^r); "reductio totius generis mei, universo Graecorum generi" (ed. Monfasani 1984c: 193, §1); "universo Graecorum, hoc est meo, generi" (ed. Monfasani 1984i: 351, §2), "dedecus generi nostro inuritur" (ed. Monfasani 1984b: 166, §16), "Graecam nationem" (ed. Monfasani 1984k: 383, §8; 406, §105), "generis

his Greekness obviously undermines the idea that the humanist broke with Greece and the Greeks after his move to Italy. It also prompts the question: how should we understand his special affinity with Greece and the Greeks? In other words, what did Greekness *mean* for Trapezuntius?

Unlike his connection with Trebizond and Crete, Trapezuntius' link with Greece and the Greeks transcended the level of biographical memories and family history. For him, to be a Greek entailed a relation of kinship (a "generis coniunctio", in his own words) linking him with an imaginary community of *Graeci* beyond personal acquaintance. This notion of kinship, aside from religion, motivated Trapezuntius to action in favour of fellow Greeks. When he addressed Pope Nicholas v in defence of a crusade, for example, he claimed that he did so because of his connection of kinship ("generis coniunctione") as he was a Greek and because of faith ("fide") as he was a Christian.²⁰ Even if he disagreed with Greeks, either philosophically (as with Theodore Gazes) or religiously (as with the Orthodox), he would eventually act and speak in their favour because they were Greeks. In his treatise *Adversus Theodorum Gazam* (1456), for instance, he recalled that on the occasion of one of his lectures in Rome, Gazes had made two stupid observations ("ex amentia quaestiones").²¹

coniunctione (Graecus enim sum)..." (ed. Monfasani 1984m: 435, §1), "neminem, credo, fugit eorum qui me norunt, Graecum me esse et in insula Creta natum..." (ed. Monfasani 1976: 341, §1).

- 20 "Quare... veniam mihi oro sanctitas tua praebeat, maxime quia et generis coniunctione (Graecus enim sum) et fide (quia Christianus) et pietate in te mea, ut dixi, compulsus diutius tacere non potui" [*May Your Holiness therefore please forgive me that I could no longer remain silent, urged by my relation of kinship (as I am a Greek) and my faith (because I am a Christian) and my devotion to You*] (Trapezuntius, ed. Monfasani 1984m: 435, §1). Also in other contexts, Trapezuntius referred to shared Greekness. In a letter to Pope Eugenius iv (1436), for example, Trapezuntius (ed. Monfasani 1984c: 196, §13) suggested that as a Greek he may contribute to the reconciliation of the Greeks with Rome. Generally, he recognised multiple peoples or nations among the Christians, of which the Greeks were only one. For example: "Sed illi (non dico Graeci tantum, sed omnes gentes quae Graecorum errores secutae sunt) divino iudicio depressi multi servitutis iugum subierunt" (ed. Monfasani 1984c: 195, §7). Trapezuntius here mentioned the Serbs, Vlachs, and Georgians by name.
- 21 On Trapezuntius' criticism of Gazes, see in more detail Monfasani (2006) with particular attention to Trapezuntius' ideas on translation practices (on p. 275, n. 1 Monfasani announces a new edition of the text). For the date of the treatise, see Monfasani (1976: 163–65). On the enmity between George Trapezuntius and Gazes, see also the letter of the latter to Marco Barbo, dating to the period 1467–71 (Gazes, ed. Leone 1990: 62–63).

He confessed that at the time, he “had not done, said, or thought anything that would offend Gazes because he seemed to be a Greek”.²²

Very much like Bessarion, Trapezuntius presupposed certain positive qualities of the *Graeci*. In his treatise against Theodore Gazes, just quoted, he ridiculed his opponent as “a Greek by birth (*natione Graecus*), but a barbarian if judged by his customs and talent (*moribus et ingenio barbarus*)”.²³ In so doing, he argued from the implicit assumption that someone is Greek not solely by virtue of his “*natio*” but also because of the “*mores*” and “*ingenium*” that Trapezuntius found absent in his opponent. Similarly, in his *Comparatio*, he appealed to Bessarion in his capacities as both Greek and Roman cardinal to put an end to the dissemination of Platonism.²⁴ This shows that, for Trapezuntius, the label *Graecus* did not merely identify someone in terms of shared origin (“*generis coniunctio*”) but also implied expectations about his character and behaviour.

Although we do not know how Trapezuntius would have explained the specific features of Greeks that were ostensibly inherent, he did articulate a theory about the native qualities of groups generally. This gives us at least a clue (even if speculative) as to how he may have seen the relation between the Greeks and their character, and perhaps also between the ancient Greeks and their fifteenth-century successors. From an observation in his *Comparatio* we learn how he saw the mutual relationship between the character or *natura* of groups and their place of origin. In his critique of Plato’s social exclusivism in the *Laws*, he restated the (pseudo-)Hippocratean view, later adopted in Aristotle’s *Politics* with respect to the Hellenes, that local environment has a decisive impact upon a man’s *natura*. In Trapezuntius’ view as expressed there, an individual’s distinctive bodily and mental features (including virtues and vices) are formed by the “climate and air” (“*coelo ac aere*”) of his birth place. This explains, for example, why Asian Greeks are generally lenient, Cretans gifted, Africans

22 “Ego autem tum, quia Graecus esse videtur, tum vel maxime, quia similes ignorantium iniurias non persequi, sed contemnere consuevi, nihil umquam feci, nihil dixi, nihil cogitavi, quod Cagem posset offendere” (Trapezuntius, ed. Mohler 1942: 280, ll. 12–15).

23 “Theodorus enim, quidam natione Graecus, moribus et ingenio barbarus, Aristotelis problemata perversione sua nuper evertit funditus atque corruptit, quantumque in ipso est, et hanc philosophiae partem e medio sustulit et auctorem eius Aristotelem tarditatis nota amentiaeque affecit, cum ineptias ei suas attribuerit” (Trapezuntius, ed. Mohler 1942: 277, ll. 20–24). Elsewhere in his response, George Trapezuntius again plays on Gazes’ Greekness (Trapezuntius, ed. Mohler 1942: 280, ll. 12–15; 285, ll. 9–11, 17–30; 320, ll. 10–29).

24 Trapezuntius (ed. Monfasani 1984b: 170, §§32–33).

cunning, Gauls arrogant, and Italians serious.²⁵ Although Trapezuntius did not apply this theory to the Greeks, the authoritative Aristotelian view was that the Hellenes constituted a perfect mix of features due to their intermediate geographical position.²⁶ On the assumption that, following Aristotle, Trapezuntius would apply the same logic to the Greeks as to the Gauls and the Italians, it can help us explain why he saw colleagues like Theodore Gazes as anomalies of nature if they did not exhibit the customs and nature typical to ‘Greeks by birth’. In this way, it puts into perspective his idea that men like Gazes “were either not born in true Greece, or (...) [were] monsters of Greece (*monstra Graeciae*) rather than Greeks”.²⁷ It may also explain his assertion elsewhere that Greece “produced” (“producere”) the most eminent talents (see below p. 160). If the ancient Greeks stemmed from the same region as the modern Greeks, *ceteris paribus*, climatological determinism would logically ensure an identical group nature for both. This would also presuppose a more or less demarcated territory where Greeks naturally lived.

Apart from all this, the Greeks for Trapezuntius also constituted a community of honour. This appears best in his *lotta* with Andrea Agaso.²⁸ This *lotta* also shows how the mutual attitudes of Latins and Greeks could trigger provocative responses on both sides. In the fifth and last book of his rhetorical magnum opus, the *Rhetoricorum libri*, Trapezuntius had criticised Guarino of Verona for

25 See Trapezuntius (1523: fol. Ri^r–Ri^v). Elsewhere, Trapezuntius also proved sensitive to ethnic stereotypes. In his *De dialectica* (cf. Monfasani 1984: 473–77), for example, he mentioned the following examples to illustrate certain types of syllogisms: “Nemo Graecorum Barbarus est; Omnes Graeci mendaces sunt; Ergo quidam mendaces non sunt Barbari” and “Quidam Germani sunt fortes; Omnes Germani sunt ebriosi; Ergo quidam fortes sunt ebriosi” (Trapezuntius: 1545: fol. 77).

26 Environmental determinism was mainly developed in the (pseudo-)Hippocratean *Airs, Waters, Places*. The relevant passage in Aristotle is *Pol.* 1327b23–33, where he claimed that the Hellenes unite the best qualities of all because their intermediate geographical position.

27 “Pudet certe me tam pinguia hodie Graecorum hominum ingenia inveniri, ut ea rerum vocabula confundi a se non videantur videre, quibus omnia philosophiae fundamenta continentur. Quare aut non in vera Graecia natos dixerim, aut monstra Graeciae magis quam Graecos esse contenderim” [*Surely I am ashamed that today such inept minds are found among the Greeks that they do not seem to understand that those words that denote things, and through which the entire fundaments of philosophy are held together, are mixed up by them. Therefore, I would either say that these men were not born in true Greece, or contend that they are monsters of Greece rather than Greeks*] (Trapezuntius, ed. Mohler 1942: 284, ll. 20–25).

28 On the phenomenon of the *lotta* see Chapter 2, p. 87, n. 93.

his Latin usage.²⁹ A certain Agaso (whom Trapezuntius held for Guarino himself) counterattacked, repeatedly playing on Trapezuntius' Greekness to stain his adversary's reputation, calling him a "Greekling" ("Graeculus"), a typical deprecatory word.³⁰ Moreover, just as Pietro Bravi had done (see Chapter 2, pp. 88–89), Agaso generalised about the character of the Greeks, presenting Trapezuntius' alleged vice of extreme admiration, or "assentatio", as a characteristic vice of the Greek nation ("Graeca natio") as a whole.³¹ Unlike Bravi, Agaso even referenced Latin authorities, both Roman and Christian, to legitimise his anti-Greek slander. Most importantly, he cited, or rather misrepresented, Cicero's opinion of the Greeks (Cic. *QFr.* 1.1.16):

And he [Trapezuntius] does not ignore how much you [Cicero], a dignified man, have always been against the shameless Greeks (*Graeculi*) and those who are his like. He remembers well that you wrote to your brother Quintus as follows: "much caution is called for with respect to friendships which may arise with certain among the Greeks themselves, apart from the very few who may be worthy of ancient Greece. Nowadays a great many of these people are false, unreliable, and schooled in overcomplaisance by long servitude. Too close intimacies with them are not trustworthy (they do not dare to oppose our wishes) and they are jealous not only of us, but also of their fellow countrymen".³²

29 See Trapezuntius (ed. Monfasani 1984j). Deitz (2006) offers a reprint of the 1538 edition of Trapezuntius' rhetorical handbook.

30 "Unum enim tuo vel cachinno vel stomacho dignum opus in manus incidit, cazambanicam redolens loquacitatem verius quam eloquentiam, quo cum auctor Graeculus Latinis dicendi rationem aperire profiteatur (est enim 'De rhetorica' liber inscriptus). (...) Non dicam quam absurdum sit et Latinis studiis turpissimum ab Graeco Latine dicendi rationem accipere, qui vix Graece, male autem Latine sciat" [*I came across a work, worthy either of your laughter or anger and redolent of twaddle rather than of eloquence, as in it the author, a Greekling, professes to explain to the Latins the art of speech (the book is after all entitled De rhetorica). (...) I cannot say how absurd it is, and most scandalous in Latin studies, to be taught the art of speaking Latin by a Greek who hardly knows Greek and speaks Latin badly*] (Agaso, ed. Monfasani 1984: 365, §2, cf. 367, §15).

31 Agaso (ed. Monfasani 1984: 365, §5). The text of the oration Agaso referred to is available in Monfasani (1984: 445–58).

32 "Non enim ignorat quam improbis suique similibus Graeculis gravis homo semper obstiteris. Meminit namque ad Q. fratrem te ita scripsisse: 'atque etiam e Graecis ipsis diligenter cavendae sunt familiaritates praeter hominum perpaucorum, si qui sunt vetere Graecia digni. Sic vero fallaces sunt permulti et leves et diuturna servitute ad nimiam assentationem eruditi. Nimie familiaritates eorum neque tam fideles sunt (non enim audent adversari nostris voluntatibus) et vero invident non nostris solum sed etiam suis'" (Agaso, ed.

In addition to Cicero, Agaso cited a persistent cliché from Christian antiquity as proof for the Greeks' bad character. In particular, he attacked Trebizond's birthplace, Crete, recalling the famous passage from Paul's letter to Titus: "A Cretan is a liar, an evil brute, an idle belly".³³ To this he added that "this is the man who shortly before dwelled for years on public expenses in Vicenza, that ancient and noble city, from which he was banned and expelled because he filled the youth with fables and other inappropriate stuff".³⁴ By citing the

Monfasani 1984: 370, §§37–38). In his tendentious quotation from Cicero's letter, Agaso omitted a crucial passage from the original text between the Latin words "eruditi" and "nimie", just before Cicero's advice not to get too intimately involved with Greeks. In the omitted line, Cicero said about the Greeks that his advice would be "to admit them freely to your company in general and to form ties of hospitality and friendship with the most distinguished" ("quos ego universos adhiberi liberaliter, optimum quemque hospitio amicitiaque coniungi dico oportere"). That the adaptation is intentional can be inferred from the fact that in the critical apparatus of Shackleton Bailey (Teubner, 1988), the line is not recorded as missing in one of the manuscripts examined. Translation of Cicero after Shackleton Bailey (Loeb, 2002).

- 33 Paul *Tit.* 1.12: "Εἰπὲν τις ἐξ αὐτῶν, Ἰδιὸς αὐτῶν προφήτης, Κρήτες αἰ ψεύσται, κακὰ θηρία, γαστέρες ἀργαί!", which is in the Vulgate: "dixit quidam ex illis proprius ipsorum propheta Cretenses semper mendaces, malae bestiae, ventres pigri". In the Latin tradition (both the Vulgate and Jerome's commentary to Paul's letter as in Hieronymus, ed. Migne 1845: 571–72), the original hexameters were omitted. In his own Latin version, Agaso restored the original prosody, which forced him to change the singular into plural (which suited his purpose here) and the Vulgate's "ventres pigri" into his own "segnis et alvus" (with "et" postponed: hence my adapted punctuation in n. 34). The fact that Agaso so explicitly referred to the line as a hexameter suggests in my view that he wanted to draw the reader's attention to his metrical reconstruction. To allude to it in this context was particularly useful, as it showed that Agaso had recognised the metre of the Greek original and mastered the translation of Greek prosody into Latin verse.
- 34 "De cuius insulae hominibus et eorum ingenio tacebo ipse, ne homini litterato conviciari videar, sed beatum Paulum audies, qui acceptum ab vetusto poeta versum hexametrum de illis breviter explicat: 'Cretensis mendax, mala bestia, segnis et alvus'. Hic est qui aliquot ante annis Vicentiam, oppidum vetus ac nobile, publico salario conductus, dum fabulis iuventutem implet et ineptiis, explosus et exhibitus est" [*I myself will be quiet about the people on this island of his (i.e. Crete) and about their intellect, so that I do not seem to slander a literate man. But listen to the blessed Paul, who put forward about them this hexametric verse (received from an ancient poet): "A Cretan is a liar, an evil brute, an idle belly". This is the man who shortly before dwelled for years on public expenses in Vicenza, that ancient and noble city, from which he was banned and expelled because he filled the youth with fables and other inappropriate stuff*] (Agaso, ed. Monfasani 1984: 368, §§19–20). In 1428, Trebizond had been expelled from Vicenza, and he believed that Guarino had had a hand in the affair (Monfasani 1976: 30).

authority of the Apostle, Agaso played on religious prejudices towards the Greeks in Italy.³⁵

In response to these insults, Trapezuntius suggested to his patron Leonello d'Este to organise a public debate in order to prove his own superiority over the Italian humanist.³⁶ His letter to Leonello shows that he construed Agaso's slander not only as a depreciation of him personally, but of the Greeks in general. As Trapezuntius explained to Leonello, he had to respond to Guarino "out of loyalty (*pietas*) both towards [his] father (*pater*) and [his] fatherland (*patria*), because the shrewd man [had] dared to vituperate Greece (*Graecia*)..."³⁷ Trapezuntius also took issue with what he perceived as a flagrant inconsistency in Agaso's hatred for the Greeks and so, in fact, criticised the general ambivalence of humanist attitudes towards contemporary Greeks (see Chapter 2). Agaso despised Trapezuntius because he was a Greek but at the same time recommended that his Latin audience read Aristotle and Demosthenes. "If you read and approve of the Greeks", Trapezuntius asked his adversary,

why then do you condemn me as a Greek? If you despise George, who is a Greek, why then do you simultaneously say that Aristotle, Isocrates, Hermogenes, and Demosthenes must be read by the Latins?"³⁸

35 Agaso did not mention the name of the Greek poet, and it seems that he was not generally known in the early modern period. Girolamo Donato (1525: fol. Civ^v), for example, attributed the line to Simonides and, like Agaso, provided a metrical Latin translation: "... Paulus illo Simonidis poetae Cretensis antiquissimi carmine invectus est: Κρήτες ἀεὶ ψεύσται, κακὰ θηρία, γαστέρες ἀργαί, id est Cretensis mendax, mala bestia tarda que ventre". Interestingly, Donato warned his readers not to apply this line to all Cretans, but specifically to the Jews who lived on the island in Paul's time.

36 Monfasani (1976: 31).

37 "Namque modo ei respondimus, non odio aut ira aut quavis alia perturbatione affecti respondimus, sed partim propter utilitatem communem, ne quis Rhetoricorum nostrorum libros, quos posteritati et humanitatis studiis consulentes edidimus, verbis eius deceptus negligat; partim pietate, tum in patrem, tum in patriam, quoniam et Graeciam vituperare... callidus homo ausus est" [*I responded to him, not out of hatred or anger did I respond, or because I was affected by some other violent emotion, but partly because of the general advantage, so that no one, deceived by the words of that man, would ignore our Rhetoricorum libri, which I published with an eye to posterity and the study of literature; partly [I also responded to him] out of loyalty both towards my father and my fatherland, because that shrewd man dared to vituperate Greece...*] (Trapezuntius, ed. Monfasani 1984k: 379, §6).

38 "Primum omnium turpissimum esse Latinis a Graeco ais homine rationem dicendi accipere. Deinde tui oblitus non multo post subdis non fuisse mihi deplorandum, si multi maioribus editi de disceptandi ratione codices amissi negligentia sunt, quoniam

The important thing about this argument is that Trapezuntius apparently felt it to be incongruous to admire the ancient Greeks but to despise modern Greeks like himself. This presupposes the idea that the fifteenth-century Greeks and the ancient Greeks were essentially the same people. The episode with Agaso also shows that, for Trapezuntius, being a Greek was also a matter of patriotic *pietas* that had to be defended against detractors.

Taken together, all these examples demonstrate that Trapezuntius' Greekness was not merely a rhetorical strategy to win the sympathy of his fellow Greeks but a prominent aspect of his self-presentation in very different circumstances, when he did not address fellow Greeks at all, or even when he defended them against Latin bias.

Although Trapezuntius arduously defended his fatherland Greece in his response to Agaso, with his *Comparatio philosophorum* (central to the second part of this chapter), he himself wrote a sharp critique of the Greek tradition to which he saw himself and his fellow Greeks belonging. Such cultural self-critique or Hellenocriticism is in itself nothing notable. Although the Greek intelligentsia in Italy were generally convinced of their cultural superiority, criticism of the present-day Greeks in general was not unusual even among them. The cultural decline of the Greeks and the fall of their empire were especially criticised. The opinion that the Byzantine Greeks were themselves responsible for their decline and fall was common. In his funeral oration for

Aristotelem, Isocratem, Hermogenem, Demosthenemque habeamus. O vere Agasonem, qui, cum a Graecis discere dedignetur, ad Graecos confugiat claraque voce predicare non erubescat dedecori esse Latinis si quicquam ex Graeco audiant cum habeant unde discant plerosque Graeciae auctores! Nonne pro scriptis rectius nostris id dici videtur? Nam si Graecos legis et probas, cur me quasi Graecum contemnis? Si Georgium, quoniam Graecus est, spernis, cur Aristotelem, Isocratem, Hermogenem, Demosthenem Latinis legendos illico subiungis?" [First, you say that for Latins it is the most scandalous thing of all to learn the art of speech from a Greek man. Subsequently, forgetful of what you yourself just said, you declare shortly afterwards that I ought not to moan if many manuscripts about the art of disputing published by the ancients are lost due to negligence, because we do have Aristotle, Isocrates, Hermogenes and Demosthenes. O, really, Agaso, who, even though he refuses to learn from Greeks, has recourse to Greeks and is not ashamed to openly declare that it is a shame for Latins if they learn something from a Greek, even if they have very many authors of Greece from whom they learn things! Don't you think that this can be also justly said of my own writings? Because if you read and approve of the Greeks, why do you condemn me as a Greek? If you despise George, who is a Greek, why then do you simultaneously say that Aristotle, Isocrates, Hermogenes, and Demosthenes must be read by the Latins?]

(Trapezuntius, ed. Monfasani 1984k: 383, §8; cf. p. 393, §48).

Ecaterina Zaccaria (ca. 1462), for example, George Hermonymos blamed the Byzantines' own wickedness for their decline.³⁹ Michele Marullo, too, asserted that the fall of Constantinople was the result of the fact that the Greeks had not sufficiently relied on their own military vigour (see Chapter 6, p. 212). Trapezuntius' Hellenocriticism, on the other hand, systematically explained the misery of contemporary Greece as the direct result of the classical Greek tradition. His *Comparatio* further confirms that we need to revise the idea that ancient Greece and the Greeks were negligible entities in Trapezuntius' thought. In the *Comparatio*, Trapezuntius moreover moved towards a more 'sacralised' vision of Greekness.

Trapezuntius' *Comparatio* and Its Immediate Context

Trapezuntius' *Comparatio philosophorum* formed part of a heated debate that Byzantine scholars imported from Byzantium. The central question was whether and (if so) how Platonic philosophy could take the place of Aristotelianism as the "handmaid of Christian theology".⁴⁰ As the problem was a bequest of Byzantium, it was at first only discussed among Byzantine scholars.⁴¹ Debates had been stirred by the circulation of Plethon's *De differentiis Aristotelis et Platonis* (1439), probably conceived in Italy during the Council of Florence, but worked out back in Mistra. In the book, Plethon laid out the differences between Aristotle and Plato in an attempt to prove the superiority of the latter. The publication of his book prompted critical responses from both supporters and opponents of Plethon's views, and most of the early refugees in Italy participated in it.⁴² Of all the treatises produced in the context of this debate, the works of Trapezuntius and Bessarion have attracted most scholarly attention. Trapezuntius' *Comparatio* is mainly known for having provoked Bessarion's

39 Hermonymos (ed. Lambros 1930: 271–73). Note that Hermonymos called his addressees "remaining Romans" ("Ῥωμαίων οἱ περιλειπόμενοι") instead of Hellenes. On the scribal and teaching activities of Charitonymos and George Hermonymos, see Kalatzi (2009).

40 Hankins (1990: I, 216–17). For an overview of the controversy and Trapezuntius' position in it, see Monfasani (1976: 201–29). On George Trapezuntius and Platonism, see Hankins (1990: I, 165–92).

41 Delbosco (2008: 27–31), Monfasani (1976: 228–29), A. Pontani (1992a: 164–65, 166).

42 Hankins (1990: I, 205–17) offers a clear introduction to the complex affair. See also Schulz (2010) for the parts played by Plethon, Bessarion, and Trapezuntius in particular.



ILLUSTRATION 5 *Tobias Stimmer, portrait of George Trapezuntius of Crete. From Paolo Giovio, Elogia virorum literis illustrium (Basle: Petrus Perna, 1577), p. 31. DFG-Projekt CAMENA, Heidelberg-Mannheim.*

much-read *In calumniatorem Platonis* that grew steadily with the help of his Roman circle in the decade after Trapezuntius' book was published in manuscript (Bessarion's treatise appeared in print more than fifty years ahead of the *Comparatio* in 1469).⁴³

43 The *Calumniator*, originally composed in Greek, was further developed with the help of Bessarion's study group in Rome and was eventually translated into Latin by, or with the help of, Niccolò Perotti. On Bessarion's Latinity and the *In calumniatorem Platonis*, see esp. Monfasani (1981, 1983a). For the text history of Bessarion's work, see also Monfasani (2008). On his Platonism and the *In calumniatorem* generally, see Hankins (1990: 1, 217–63) and Todt (2006). On the history of Bessarion's treatise, see Monfasani (2013). For some humanist responses to the work, see Neuhausen and Trapp (1979) and Strobl (2000).

In the *Comparatio*, Trapezuntius defended Aristotle's philosophy against Plato's. As we shall see, one of the arguments running through the book is that Plato and his followers had not only caused the Christian schism and the fall of the Greeks but also impending doom for the Christian West due to the rise of Islam. If the fall of Constantinople in 1453 had been the divine punishment for the Greek schism,⁴⁴ the schism itself was the outcome of a millenary process of Platonic corruption, as were Mohammed and Islam.⁴⁵ In his *Calumniator*, Bessarion in response tried to harmonise the ancient philosophers both with each other and with the fundamentals of Christian doctrine. As James Hankins observed, the cardinal's book was not only a rebuttal of Trapezuntius' anti-Platonist tract, but also "a defence of the Greek heritage *latè sumpta*".⁴⁶ Although this is true, it must be stressed that, inversely, Trapezuntius' *Comparatio* was not a misohellenist depreciation of the Greek heritage, broadly speaking.⁴⁷ Although he argued that Plato was a puppet of the Antichrist, Trapezuntius equally stressed that ancient Greece before Plato had been a morally upright country and that Aristotelian philosophy was fully consistent with Christian doctrine or even foreshadowed it.

In his view on the Platonic tradition, it seems that Trapezuntius combined various strands of anti-Platonism into one coherent apocalyptic narrative that he developed throughout his comparisons between Plato and Aristotle. The *Comparatio* in fact offers a "compendium of the entire tradition of Western anti-Platonism from Aristotle to Leonardo Bruni".⁴⁸ Trapezuntius indeed criticised Plato for the three major issues that appear in this tradition: obscurity, moral perversity, and theological inconsistency.⁴⁹ Also in the Greek East, there was an important body of heresiological literature comprising extensive lists and classifications of heresies, tracing some of them (for example, belief in

44 Cf. Trapezuntius (ed. Mercati 1943: 94).

45 Monfasani (1976: 149, 183).

46 Hankins (1990: I, 233).

47 On the textual history of Trapezuntius' *Comparatio*, see Monfasani (2008). The only printed text available is the edition of 1523. In the absence of a modern critical edition, I decided with A. Pontani (1992a: 150) to rely on it. Trapezuntius' work consists of three substantial chapters or books. The first discusses the learning of Plato and Aristotle; the second investigates their ideas against the backdrop of Christian doctrine; the third finally looks at both philosophers from a moral point of view. In all three, Aristotle surpasses Plato on all counts.

48 Hankins (1990: I, 237). On the criticism of Plato's philosophy with particular attention to the positions of Bessarion and Trapezuntius see Kaiser (2013).

49 Hankins (1996).

metempsychosis, numerical speculation, and the idea of eternal matter) directly back to Plato (or Socrates, often in conjunction with Pythagoras). As far as I know, however, none of these highly ‘specialised’ anti-Platonic traditions produced a narrative thread in which Platonic corruption progressively led from Athens via Rome, Constantinople and Islam to the writer’s present. Although it is beyond the scope of the present study to pinpoint the exact textual bases for Trapezuntius’ individual criticisms, it seems that he adopted elements of the anti-Platonist tradition that existed in both East and West and extended these to cover a wider range of deviance from the Aristotelian-Roman norm as he perceived it. Ironically, his abhorrence of Plato brought Trapezuntius close to the Orthodox circles of Scholarios, the first Orthodox patriarch in Constantinople after 1453, who was averse to any attempt to revive Plato and established Aristotle instead as the standard philosophical reference point for the Orthodox Church. It would merit a self-standing investigation as to what degree Trapezuntius was indebted to the Byzantine tradition. If it could be shown, for instance, that he also used Byzantine heresiological literature to construct his view of the Platonic tradition, this would put him in an interesting and complicated relationship with Byzantine heresiology.

His prophetic and apocalyptic mindset eventually inspired Trapezuntius to meld the individual philosophical and theological criticisms of the Platonic tradition into one coherent story.⁵⁰ Over a period of at least 30 years before he composed the *Comparatio*, Trapezuntius had already expressed his apocalyptic visions on various occasions, ably adapting the details of his prophecies to the ever-altering circumstances.⁵¹ By the time he wrote his *Comparatio* in the mid-1450s, he believed that the fall of Constantinople had definitively signalled that the end times was impending, and that the Apostasy had already started in Rome.⁵² More than he did elsewhere, in the *Comparatio* he wove the Greeks into this cosmic drama. To do so, he worked a historical narrative through his detailed comparisons between Plato and Aristotle. He made both philosophers, with their respective followers, the main historical agents in the history of Hellenism. While Plato and the ‘Platonici’ represented everything bad, heretical, and Oriental, Aristotle and his adherents embodied everything

50 Cf. Hankins (1990: I, 172).

51 For the development and (principally biblical and Byzantine) sources of Trapezuntius’ prophetic and apocalyptic views, see Monfasani (1976: 35, 49–53, 87–103, 128–36, 140–41, 149, 155, 159, 183–84, 188, 199, 221–25). Relevant texts for the subject are Trapezuntius (1523; ed. Monfasani 1984c, 1984e, 1984i, 1984l, 1984m, 1984p, 1984q; ed. Mohler 1942).

52 Monfasani (1976: 129–36).

good, Orthodox, and Western.⁵³ Unlike the Platonists, the Aristotelians had always either paved the way for Christianity or promoted the Latin Church and the Union. This is an extremely Hellenocentric piece of apocalyptic history that is obviously difficult to reconcile with the idea that for Trapezuntius, ancient Greece had become irrelevant. In what follows, I will reconstruct his narrative of Platonic decline and Aristotelian progress, paying particular attention to the ways in which Trapezuntius constructed the notion of a Greek tradition throughout his philosophical essays. As he did not write a continuous chronological story, what follows is not so much a summary or paraphrase as it is a reconstruction of the narrative he himself worked quite loosely through his argument.

Enemies From Within: Plato and the Platonists

Trapezuntius created a basic caesura between Greece before and Greece after Plato, between “*prisca Graecia*” or unspoiled Greece and “*Platonica Graecia*” or Platonic Greece.⁵⁴ “*Prisca Graecia*” was an idealised country governed by legendary kings and lawgivers such as Draco and Solon, Minos and Lycurgus, Laius, and Rhadamanthys.⁵⁵ The unspoiled Greeks intuitively lived largely in compliance with Christian morality. The fifth-century Athenian Cimon, Themistocles, Miltiades, and Pericles were later representatives of this morally still-upright Greece, and they receive special attention in the treatise. In a separate section, Trapezuntius commemorated these Four Heroes and recalled how they had established Athens as the centre of the Greek world. He particularly stressed their role in the defence of Greece against Persian invasions and claimed that without them the “Greek people” (“*Graecorum gens*”) would have perished well before 1453.⁵⁶ Importantly, Trapezuntius explained that his hatred for Plato had first emerged when he realised that the Athenian philosopher had written offensively about these four national heroes. In the *Gorgias*, according to Trapezuntius, Plato had dared to call the “parents of the customs of ancient Greece” and “the liberators of Greece” not only seducers but also

53 Cf. Garin (1973: 115).

54 Cf. Trapezuntius (1523: fols. Ri^v, Rii^r, Sv^r. Sviii^r, Ti^v). Elsewhere, Trapezuntius (ed. Monfasani 1984k: 406, §107) hailed Greece along the same lines as the inventor of all arts.

55 Trapezuntius (1523: fols. Qiii^r, Siv^v, Svii^v, Sviii^r, Tv^r).

56 Trapezuntius (1523: fols. Pi^v–Pii^r). Elsewhere Trapezuntius referred to the Greeks as “our people” (“*gens nostra*”, fol. Qi^v).

smooth-talkers.⁵⁷ He was so appalled by Plato's lack of respect for his own fatherland and ancestors that he decided to hate him forever.⁵⁸

This particular anti-Platonic argument stands out in the *Comparatio*, as it is not religious or philosophical in inspiration but chiefly patriotic. It also stands out because, as such, it is indebted to a tradition other than those of philosophical anti-Platonism or heresiology. Trapezuntius was not the first to criticise Plato for his attitudes towards the Great Four. Although he does not mention him by name, the second-century Greek orator Aelius Aristides had also defended their honour against Plato in one of his so-called Platonic orations. For Aristides, Plato's philosophical criticism of the Four had undermined the integrity of the classical Hellenic canon which he sought to restore. Very much unlike Trapezuntius, however, Aristides had sought to rectify Plato by scrutinising his works for statements contradicting the philosopher's own ideas in the *Gorgias* and by loading him with compliments.⁵⁹ While Aristides thus tried to defend the integrity of Hellenism "without losing Plato" (to use the words of Jan-Jaap Flinterman), Trapezuntius tried to save what he regarded as good and pure Hellenism by revealing Plato's fundamental perversity and by eliminating him from the admitted canon of Greek thought. In this respect, he also crucially differed from his adversary Bessarion, who voiced a holistic vision of the Greek heritage.

Trapezuntius' golden age of "prisca Graecia" existed roughly from the time of Minos until the end of the fourth century BC, when Plato's teachings began to take effect.⁶⁰ In his tendentious discussion of the *Phaedrus*, Trapezuntius dramatically represented the eponymous conversation partner of Socrates

57 Trapezuntius regarded Cimon, Themistocles, Miltiades, and Pericles as the fathers of Greece: "morum veteris Graeciae parentes", "liberatores Graeciae" (fol. Ovi^r), "principes totius Graeciae" (fol. Oviii^r), "sancti viri", "rei militaris principes", "summi imperatores" versus "seductores" and "rhetores" (fol. Oviii^v), "liberatores patriae", "lumina Graeciae", "pudoris custodes", "fortitudinis columen", "hostium terror", "bonorum tutores", "quattuor fulmina belli" (fol. Pi^r), and "parentes patriae", "heroes semidei" (fol. Pi^v). Trapezuntius castigated Plato for his attitude towards the four heroes of Athens in a separate section entitled "De invidia et obrectatione Platonis in quattuor viros salvatores Graeciae" (fols. Ov^v–Pii^r).

58 Trapezuntius (1523: fol. Ov^v).

59 Flinterman (2000: 36–39).

60 It appears that some saw Minos as the first attested Hellene (M. Apostoles, ed. Stefec 2010: 142). Note that elsewhere, Trapezuntius referred to Greece as still "flourishing" ("Graecia florens") at the time of Philip of Macedon and Alexander the Great (Trapezuntius, ed. Mercati 1943: 88, 90).

at the turning point of Greek (and world) history.⁶¹ In his account, Phaedrus was a modest Athenian boy, educated according to “the discipline of ancient Greece” (“sub disciplina Graeciae veteris educatus”), and typically preferring death over unchastity. The city of Athens, on the other hand, had fallen into decline as it strayed from the “unspoiled mores of the Athenians” (“priscae Atheniensium mores”) and was full of predatory lovers seducing young boys. Therefore, Phaedrus left the city for the countryside in order to avoid them and encountered Socrates on his way. In Trapezuntius’ rendering of the story, Plato’s mouthpiece advanced an argument in praise of “voluptas” (playing on pederasty) as the absolute prerequisite for a happy life, a theme that recurred time and again in Trapezuntius’ discussion of ‘Platonism’ from Epicurus to Mohammed.⁶² By framing Plato’s dialogue in this way, Trapezuntius presented Phaedrus as a case in point of how Plato’s ideas had begun corrupting the Athenian youth, and by extension all of Greece.

In order to corrupt Athens, Trapezuntius claimed, Plato had introduced new precepts and rules that violated the traditional customs and institutions of his fatherland, especially in his *Laws*.⁶³ By inducing his audience to embrace his philosophy, Plato ruined the Greeks morally.⁶⁴ Before the advent of Plato, Greek culture, according to Trapezuntius, had generally been characterised by purity of morals, as Phaedrus’ case well illustrated.⁶⁵ Before Platonism, for example, children did not bathe together with their parents, as the unspoiled Greeks believed that the parents’ nudity would undermine their authority.⁶⁶

61 Trapezuntius (1523: fols. Nv^r–Nvi^v).

62 Kaiser (2013: 393–94).

63 “Plato senex mores et instituta patriae negligens nova, inaudita, incredibilia, repugnantia excogitabat” [*As an old man Plato, showing neglect for the customs and institutes of his fatherland, designed things that were new, unheard of, incredible, and repulsive*] (Trapezuntius 1523: fol. Rii^r). Note that Trapezuntius had translated the *Laws* into Latin in 1450–51 and dedicated the book first to Nicholas v and then to the Senate of Venice (Garin 1973: 115).

64 Trapezuntius (1523: fols. Sviii^r–Tiii^v) described the destruction of Greece in a separate section with the programmatic title “Quod Platonis scripta, praecepta, instituta Graeciam perdidierunt”. See also fols. Miii^r–Mv^v: “Quod omnis haeretica perversitas et Graecorum calamitas a Platonis orta est scriptis, ab Aristotelicis contra maxime Latini adiuti sunt”. According to Trapezuntius (fol. Pii^r), Plato also tried to impose his precepts outside his fatherland, e.g., on Crete.

65 Trapezuntius (1523: fol. Sviii^v) used the word “castimonia”.

66 In these lines, Trapezuntius stressed chastity, especially among boys. After Plato’s influence had spread even to Rome, it was sometimes thought shameful for a boy not to have a lover (Trapezuntius 1523: fol. Sviii^v). Generally, Trapezuntius emphasised Plato’s corruption of sexual morals (pederasty) and nuptial customs (polygamy) before anything else.

Trapezuntius believed that Greek “castimonia” had been ruined by Plato’s writings, and moral and cultural degeneration gained ground with the spread of his philosophy. Plato’s writings “first destroyed Greece with their poisonous breath and then swept away all other peoples through the authority and eloquence of Platonic Greece (*platonica Graecia*)”.⁶⁷ His precepts enabled the “corruptors of good morals” to continue their work,⁶⁸ and thus Plato “planted the roots, sowed the seeds, laid the basis for the ruin”.⁶⁹ In this way, moral and cultural degeneration gained ground with the spread of Platonism.

This is not to say, on the other hand, that pre-Platonic “*prisca Graecia*” had been wholly free from sources of immorality. Trapezuntius compared immorality to the Hydra, the water-serpent killed by Heracles. Its self-regenerating heads had been cut off by virtuous men like Solon and Lycurgus, but were eventually restored and nourished by Plato’s writings. According to Trapezuntius, the chief countervailing force was represented by Aristotle and his most famous pupil, Alexander the Great. In one of the essays of the *Comparatio* (the eighth of the third book), Trapezuntius defended Alexander against his detractors just as he defended Aristotle in the rest of the volume. The most important point in his argument was that together Aristotle and Alexander had prepared the way for the dissemination of Christian truth and the word of God. The former offered the philosophical concepts to understand nature, while the latter’s empire had spread the Greek language all over the world and so enabled all peoples to read and understand Scripture (an idea Trapezuntius

See, for instance, fols. Tv^r–Tv^v, Tvi^r–Tvii^r (discussing Epicurus) and fols. Vi^v–Vii^v (discussing Mohammed).

67 “Herculeis viribus Hydrae pestiferum efflantis capita detruncarunt, quae postea Platonis temporibus renata librisque ipsis nutrita, aucta magnarumque virium facta, primum Graeciam, deinde auctoritate ac eloquentia platonicae Graeciae quasi colubri omnes gentes venenoso afflatu confecerunt” [*With Herculean force they cut off the heads of the Hydra, breathing out pernicious airs, that revived thereafter in Plato’s time, however, and were nourished and strengthened by his very books and gained great strength. They first destroyed Greece like snakes with their poisonous breath, but then Greece swept away all other peoples on the authority and with the eloquence of Platonism*] (Trapezuntius 1523: fol. Tv^r).

68 Trapezuntius (1523: fols. Sviii^r–Sviii^v).

69 “[Plato] qui radices plantavit, semina sevit, fundamenta perditionis iecit...” (Trapezuntius 1523: fol. Viii^r).

probably derived from Eusebius).⁷⁰ So, while primeval Greeks such as Minos, Lycurgus, and Laius had ruled in the golden age of “*prisca Graecia*”, and the Four Heroes had established and enlarged Greek civilisation afterwards, Aristotle and Alexander had finally made it the basis for biblical revelation. In this way, Trapezuntius created a kind of national Greek pantheon to which he added other Greeks as well (see below, p. 160).

The Orientalisation of Platonism: Islam as a Platonic Sect

In Trapezuntius’ account throughout the *Comparatio*, Platonism grew like a snowball going downhill. From Athens, moral corruption, sanctified by Plato, spread all over Greece, captured the cities of Italy, and extended further into Europe to Gaul. In the course of his argument, Trapezuntius pointed at some of the protagonists of the Platonic enterprise that had begun in the fourth century BC, but continued to his own days. The three most important advocates of Platonism throughout history were Epicurus, the prophet Mohammed, and Plethon.⁷¹ Through the teaching of Epicurus, whom Trapezuntius called Plato’s “disciple”, Platonism continued to infect the civilised from the time of Plato until that of Nero (AD 68).⁷² Afterwards, Plato’s influence spread all over the Roman world through other channels, but mainly through the regimes of perverted Roman emperors. Besides Emperor Maximinus Thrax (173–238),⁷³ Emperor Elagabalus (218–222), notorious for his disregard for Roman taboos, implemented a voluptuous regime in Plato’s spirit and so corrupted the

70 See here A. Pontani (1992a: 169). Monfasani prepares an edition of Trapezuntius’ Latin translation of Eusebius’ *Preparatio evangelica*.

71 Their influence is discussed in the section called “Quod non Aristoteli sed Epicuro et Machumeto convenit Plato” (Trapezuntius 1523: fols. Tv^r–Tvii^v). Mohammed is treated most extensively in the section called “De Machumeto et quod longe Platone astutior” (fols. Tvii^v–Vv^r, with the difference between the two discussed on fol. Vii^v). Plethon’s role is explained in the section “De Gemisto et quod nisi obstes initiis parvis, mag-nae plerumque calamitates insequuntur, quae res unius Machumeti patet exemplo” (fols. Vvi^v–Xi^v).

72 Trapezuntius (1523: fol. Tvi^r–Tvi^v). According to Trapezuntius, the process was accelerated because the Greek language was commonly known. In Europe, this can be explained both through general familiarity with Greek science and letters, and through the extent of the Roman Empire. In Asia, through the influence of Alexander’s empire.

73 Trapezuntius (1523: fol. Tvii^r).

Romans.⁷⁴ Trapezuntius also ridiculed a later Roman emperor who had allegedly said that it was better to use Plato than the Christian gospel as a guide to life, and he explained the loss of provinces to the Arabs under his reign directly as the result of the influence of Plato's writings.⁷⁵ According to Trapezuntius, Plato's ideas were also behind the schismatic forces within the Church, such as Arius (fourth century) and Palamas (fourteenth century). Therefore, Platonism was ultimately responsible for God's indignation towards the Greeks and their Church and so also for the destruction of Constantinople.⁷⁶

According to Trapezuntius, after Platonism had corrupted the entire Greco-Roman world, Plato's influence did not halt. What follows is perhaps the most spectacular idea that sprang from his apocalyptic mind. He saw the prophet Mohammed as a disciple and imitator of Plato, a "third Plato" after Epicurus, and even a quasi-incarnation of the philosopher.⁷⁷ Indoctrinated by a Platonic priest from Alexandria, Mohammed had allegedly purified Plato's philosophy of its most stunning perversions and had added some simple rules of life to it. Then, after uniting Arabia, he had subjected to his doctrine all of Asia, Africa, and even some parts of Europe.⁷⁸ He thus posed a more persistent threat to Christendom than Roman emperors such as Nero, whose attempts to extirpate the Christians had been checked, or even Plato himself, whose laws had in fact never been materialised in a concrete polity, but had "evaporated like a breeze, a shadow or even more in the manner of a dream".⁷⁹ The most dangerous thing about Mohammed's Platonism (i.e. Islam) was that his precepts were

74 Trapezuntius (1523: fols. Sviii^v–Ti^r). Note that Trapezuntius recalled that Elagabalus was the son of "a Greek whore" ("meretricis Graeculae filius", fol. Sviii^v).

75 Trapezuntius (1523: fols. Ti^r–Ti^v). The unidentified emperor is qualified as a "Roman emperor or rather a lascivious Greekling" ("Romanus quidam imperator aut potius levis Graeculus", fol. Ti^r). As Trapezuntius claimed that at the time of this emperor's reign, Syria (637) and Egypt (641) fell to the Arabs (fol. Ti^v), it would seem that he referred to Emperor Heraclius (r. 610–41) who introduced Greek as the official language of the Roman Empire and was the first to adopt the Greek title βασιλεύς instead of the romanising αὐγουστος.

76 Trapezuntius (1523: fols. Miii^v–Mv^v): "Quod omnis haeretica perversitas et Graecorum calamitas a Platonis orta est scriptis, ab Aristotelicis contra maxime Latini adiuti sunt". Trapezuntius voiced the idea that the Greeks had been punished for their schism more than once (for example Trapezuntius, ed. Monfasani 1984i: 357–58; ed. Mercati 1943: 93–94).

77 Trapezuntius (1523: fols. Tii^r, Tvii^r, Vvi^r, Vii^v).

78 Trapezuntius (1523: fols. Tvii^r–Tvii^v, Viii^r–Viii^v). The priest from Alexandria was an Arian monk. Trapezuntius probably derived the story from George Hamartolos' *Chronicle* or Guibert of Nogent's *Gesta dei per Francos* (Monfasani 1976: 158, with n. 121).

79 Trapezuntius (1523: fol. Viii^r).

endorsed by the most powerful people now on earth, the Ottoman Turks, who threatened the Christian commonwealth.⁸⁰ By the time Trapezuntius wrote the *Comparatio*, “the third Plato” had taken large parts of the East, and not finally Constantinople, the bulwark of Christian piety.⁸¹ From there, he now threatened all of Christianity.

These pages of Trapezuntius’ *Comparatio* radically invert the usual patterns of humanist thought about the Eastern enemy and, more importantly, the enemy’s relation to the civilised Greco-Roman order of things. While Silvio Piccolomini, for example, declared that the fall of Byzantium meant a “second death for Plato”, Trapezuntius saw it as a result of Plato’s third incarnation and imagined Plato and Mohammed sitting side by side, dreaming of the complete obliteration of Greece and the Christian West.⁸² Cardinal Bessarion, too, stressed the traditional struggle of Western civilisation against Eastern barbarism and relegated the enemy to the barren plains far beyond the borders of Hellenism and Europe. In his *Orationes contra Turcas*, he depicted the Turks as insatiable barbarians who owed their successes not to their innate qualities, but to the disorganisation of their prey.⁸³ He placed them on par with the other “externae nationes” that had threatened Europe and Italy in the past and reckoned them among the “remotae nationes”.⁸⁴ For his part, Trapezuntius had similarly depicted Asia as the natural enemy of Europe in his own crusade appeals; he had also represented Greece and the Greeks as the major traditional defence of Europe against Asian aggression.⁸⁵ In a speech to Pope Nicholas v, he mentioned Miltiades, Themistocles, and Alexander the Great as examples of Greeks who had defended Europe against Asian invasions or had even subjected parts of Asia itself. In his *Comparatio*, however, he blurred this iron-clad division between Asia and Europe or between Greece and the barbarians. He made the position of Greece in the struggle between East and West

80 Trapezuntius (1523: fols. Vv^r–Vvi^r) (“Excursio in desidiā Christianorum”) draws particular attention to the persistent threat of Islam to the Christian West.

81 Monfasani (1976: 129–30).

82 Trapezuntius (1523: fol. Vv^r). For Piccolomini’s famous statement about the fall of Constantinople (“secunda mors ista Homero est, secundus Platonis obitus”), see Pertusi (1976: II, 46).

83 See Bessarion (1470: fols. 10^r–10^v = ed. Migne 1866c: 652–53) and Bessarion (1470: fol. 18^v = ed. Migne 1866c: 659). See also Bessarion’s descriptions of Mehmet the Conqueror (Bessarion 1470: 11^r, 15^r, 17^r = ed. Migne 1866c: 653, 656–58).

84 Bessarion (1470: fols. 17^r–19^r, 26^r–26^v = ed. Migne 1866c: 658–59, 665).

85 See his exhortations to King Alfonso v of Aragon, Emperor Frederick III, and Pope Nicholas v, all composed before the fall of Constantinople. Trapezuntius (ed. Monfasani 1984; 1984m). The orations are discussed in Bisaha (2004: 115–16) and Ravegnani (1975).

ambivalent by insisting that the enemies of Christendom (most eminently the Ottoman Turks) were nourished by a central figure of Greek philosophy.

It was not only via Mohammed's teachings that Plato continued to exert his devastating impact on the world. After Plato, Greece itself once more produced a threat to the Christian world, and this time it came from Sparta instead of Athens. Trapezuntius saw Plethon as a "second Mohammed", a "disciple of Plato" and even a "fourth Plato".⁸⁶ Trapezuntius recalled how he had heard Plethon openly reject both Islam and Christianity in favour of paganism at the Council of Florence.⁸⁷ In a letter to Cardinal Bessarion, he further explained how the decline and fall of the Greeks resulted from Plethon's influence upon the last Byzantine emperor. In Trapezuntius' view, Emperor Constantine XI had been fatally affected by Plethon's ideas. In order to substantiate his claim, he referred to an oracle of Apollo regarding the fortification of the Peloponnesus. This curious Greek text (dating from after 1423) circulated among Italian humanists in the second half of the fifteenth century and was rendered into Latin by Cyriac of Ancona, Nikolaos Sekoundinos, and Bessarion's secretary Niccolò Perotti.⁸⁸ In the oracle, it was prophesied how the Hexamilion Wall

86 "alter Machumetus", "Platonis et eloquentia et scientia et pietate alumnus" (Trapezuntius 1523: fols. Vvi^v–Vvii^r) and "quartus iste Plato" (fol. Xii^v).

87 "Audivi ego ipsum Florentiae, venit enim ad concilium cum Graecis, asserentem unam eandemque religionem, uno animo, una mente, una praedicatione, universum orbem paucis post annis suscepturum. Cumque rogassem Christianae an Machumeti, neutram, inquit, sed non a gentilitate differentem. Quibus verbis commotus, semper odi, et venenosam viperam pertimui, nec videre aut audire amplius potui. Percepi etiam a nonnullis Graecis, qui ex Peloponneso huc profugerunt, palam dixisse ipsum anteaquam mortem obisset, iam fere triennio, non multis annis post mortem suam et Machumetum et Christum lapsum iri, et veram in omnes orbis oras veritatem perfulsuram" [*I heard him in Florence (he had come to the Council with the Greeks) claim that within a few years the whole world would take on one and the same religion with one soul, one spirit, and one confession. And when I asked him whether this religion would be Christian or Mohammedan he answered: neither, but not different from paganism. Disturbed by these words, I always hated him, and I feared the poisonous viper; and I could not see or hear him anymore. From not a few Greeks who came here from the Peloponnesus I learned that he openly said before he died some three years ago that both Mohammed and Christ would lapse not many years after his death, and that the real truth would shine over all coasts of the world*] (Trapezuntius 1523: fol. Vvii^r).

88 The text was first edited by Lambros (1905: 475–76), with corrections by Bodnar (1960: 166–67). The more correct text of Bodnar is reproduced in Stok (1999: 13–14). An Italian translation of the Greek text is in Prete (1981), but it should not be consulted without the Greek text because of the translator's license in rendering the original. Like Sekoundinos'

(defending the Peloponnesus from invasions from Attica) would be destroyed and restored three times before there would come justice and fortune for the Hellenic people, and their enemies would be finally yoked.⁸⁹ As Trapezuntius saw it, Constantine XI had been credulous enough to believe the oracle. Despite his attempts to stop him, the emperor had decided to rebuild the wall.⁹⁰ As a result of this, he had elicited God's wrath and had to perish since, according to Trapezuntius, "he did not follow Christ as did the first Constantine, but Apollo and Plato and the impious Gemistos".⁹¹

At this point, the modern reader may wonder if Trapezuntius was serious about all this. One fact will illustrate just how serious he was about the perverting influence of Gemistos Plethon. When Sigismondo Malatesta transferred the remains of Plethon from the Peloponnesus to Rimini, and reburied them like a saint's relics in his Tempietto, Trapezuntius urged the *principe* to remove the philosopher's body. When the prince died two years later in 1468, the Greek scholar explained Malatesta's death to his wife and children as a direct result of his reluctance to remove the cursed corpse from his Tempietto. He added that if they would not act immediately to remove the corpse even worse would happen to them.⁹² For Trapezuntius, Plethon embodied the dangerous tradition that via Mohammed and Epicurus extended back to Plato. Paradoxically, Byzantium was thus connected with its conqueror via Plato. The Byzantines strayed away from the truth of the Roman Church due to the influence of Platonic sects. For this, they had now been punished by their subjugation to the Ottoman Turks, who followed Plato's precepts in the formulation given

Latin rendering (cf. Mastrodimitris 1970), Cyriac's remains unedited (cf. Stok 1999: 13). For the translation of Perotti (with a concise commentary), see Stok (1999) and Prete (1981). As Perotti dedicated his work to the Venetian doge, his translation should probably be seen in the context of Bessarion's mission to Venice (Stok 1999: 11, Prete 1981: 229). As the text was well disseminated, it is possible that Trapezuntius' knew Perotti's translation as well as the link of the oracle with Bessarion (Stok 1999: 14–18).

89 "... δίκη δ' ἐς Ἑλλήνων γένος οὐρανόθεν ἤξει τύχης μέτα, καὶ τοὺς πρὶν αὐτῶν ἀναιδέας ὀλετήρας ὑποθήσει ζεύγλη. Μακάριτατος δ' ἐστὶν ὁ τὸ τέταρτον ἰσθμὸν τειχίσων ἐνοσίχθονος πέδον" (cited from Stok 1999: 13–14).

90 Trapezuntius (ed. Monfasani 1984b: 171, §37). The letter is now lost.

91 "Aedificavit et per iram dei perdidit. Quare? Quia non est secutus Christum ut Constantinus primus, sed Apollinem Platonemque simul ac impium Gemistum" (Trapezuntius, ed. Monfasani 1984b: 171, §36).

92 See on this matter Saladin (2000a: 74–76) and Monfasani (1976: 214–15). Trapezuntius' own version of the affair is in Trapezuntius (ed. Monfasani 1984b: 171–72). On the alliance between the Palaeologan dynasty and the Malatesta, see Ronchey (2000).

by their prophet Mohammed. As Western rulers such as Malatesta embraced Platonism, the same danger could befall Europe. Although Plethon himself had not succeeded in bringing about the fall of Christendom, Trapezuntius believed that the climax of the struggle between Platonists and Aristotelians, East and West, or heresy and orthodoxy, was close at hand.

From the Ancient Past Into the Present

The previous sections showed how Trapezuntius connected the ancient past with later phases of history through his narrative of Platonic decline and Aristotelian progress: countervailing forces that not only shaped Hellenism in the past but world history up to Trapezuntius' own day. In order to understand how his interpretation of the role of the Greeks in history bore upon his views on their role in the present we must take into account the immediate context of the *Comparatio*. Trapezuntius' views on the Greek legacy in this specific work resulted from the conjunction of his apocalyptic visions and his changed personal relationship with the main protagonists of Platonic philosophy, centered round Bessarion's court in Rome. Although Trapezuntius had been part of Bessarion's circle in the 1440s, his relations with the cardinal cooled and eventually degenerated into open hostility in the 1460s.⁹³ In his above-cited treatise against Theodore Gazes, he had already argued fanatically that the "Cagulei" (the Roman admirers of Gazes) perverted true philosophy and ought to be stopped.⁹⁴ He felt that Plethon's books should be burnt, especially since he

... ardently fear[ed] that, if they were saved, they could inflict great damage on the feeble and miserable Greeks, who, due to their ignorance, [were] seduced by the sole allurements of words.⁹⁵

93 The origin of the disagreement had been Bessarion's preference of Gazes over Trapezuntius as a translator of Aristotle, but at least for Trapezuntius implied much more (see Monfasani 1976: 155). On the deteriorating relations between Bessarion and Trapezuntius, see also Abenstein (2013).

94 Gazes responded to the alleged connection with Plethon by carefully dissociating himself from the philosopher in a letter to Bessarion, partly meant as a response to Trapezuntius' attack. See Labowsky (1968: 185–86).

95 "Quare, sicut Cagulei omni cura, opera, studio philosophiam opprimere conantur, ut gradum hunc ad maiora faciant, sic nos navare operam decet a primo actu, tum gradu ipsos deicere. Id facilius fiet, si primum diligenter opera dabitur, ut, si combusti non sunt, illius impii libri eruantur protrahanturque e tenebris et incendio consecrentur,—vehementer enim timeo, ne servati magnum postea damnum imbecillioribus faciant, et maxime

In the *Comparatio* Trapezuntius now replaced the “Cagulei” of his treatise against Gazes by the more inclusive “Platonici” and made them not only the perverters of Aristotle and the Greeks, but of Latin Christianity and the world.⁹⁶ In so doing, Trapezuntius fused the idea that the Platonists of Bessarion’s circle had launched a conspiracy against him with his apocalyptic vision that the Apostasy had started in Rome. In this way, he presented the entire Greek tradition from Plato onwards as if it had prefigured the internal philosophical division of the Byzantine intelligentsia in Italy.

It seems that Trapezuntius saw important roles for himself and Bessarion in this struggle between Aristotle and Plato, Christianity and paganism, good and bad. In his letter to the cardinal regarding the *Calumniator*, Trapezuntius accused him openly and by name of unchristian views. According to him, Bessarion had given the impression that he revered Plato as if he were God and that he wanted to introduce Plato’s vices into the Church.⁹⁷ In this way, he placed the cardinal on par with the Platos who had preceded him.⁹⁸ Trapezuntius on the

miseris Graecis, qui propter ignorantiam solis verborum lenociniis ducuntur... [That is why, just like the “Cagulei” with all care, pains, and concentration attempt to suppress philosophy, aiming to attain to higher things, so it is appropriate for us to act vigorously at once to cast them down from the ladder. This is more easily done, if first serious pains will be given to bring to light these impious books of his (if they have not yet been burnt) and remove them from the shadow and commit them to the flames—I ardently fear that, if they were saved, they could procure great damage to the rather feeble and miserable Greeks, who, due to their ignorance, are seduced by the sole allurements of words...] (Trapezuntius, ed. Mohler 1942: 340, ll. 27–34).

96 Monfasani (1976: 159).

97 Trapezuntius (ed. Monfasani 1984b: 170, §§32–23). It must be noted that Trapezuntius’ incriminations of Bessarion and his circle were certainly tendentious. Although Bessarion continued admiring his Spartan teacher after his death, there were significant differences between their ideas. While Bessarion was in favour of the Union of the Churches, for example, Plethon seems to have been indifferent (M. Zorzi 1987: 69–70; Lotti 1994: 92–96.). Their opinions also differed in matters as important as the Holy Trinity, the Procession of the Holy Spirit, and fate (Lotti 1994: 80; Monfasani 1994). Moreover, Plethon believed that the Hellenes had degenerated because they had lost their Hellenic belief in divine providence and had united with the Latins; Bessarion riposted that those who embraced the Union with the Latins must be praised as devout Christians and patriots (he used the word “φιλόπατρις” in this context, for which see Monfasani 1994: 848–54, esp. nos. 23 and 24). Bessarion also criticised his teacher’s opposition to Aristotle, and for him the theological-Christian tradition always outdid the philosophical-Platonist tradition (Lotti 1994: 80).

98 Monfasani (1976: 159–62) writes that Trapezuntius prophesied the advent of a ‘fourth’ Plato after Mohammed (the second) and Plethon (the third) and that he identified

other hand also recognised a living Aristotelian tradition. Although present-day Greece had collapsed and had been reduced to an “uncultivated field”, it had still produced (“produxit”) at least two worthy men, namely Isidore of Kiev and Patriarch Gregory III.⁹⁹ They stood in a long tradition. The unspoiled Greeks had been paragons of military virtue and moral purity; the Four Heroes of Athens had maintained the liberty and integrity of this unspoiled Greek life that in many ways anticipated Christian morality; Aristotle and Alexander the Great had paved the way for the dissemination of Christian truth; and now Isidore and Gregory did everything in their power to achieve Church unity and so tried to solve one of the most devastating results of nearly two millennia of Platonism. Together with the likely addition of Trapezuntius himself to the list, Isidore and Gregory complete the Pantheon of Greek Heroes that emerges from the *Comparatio*.

In order to understand the role Trapezuntius saw for himself in the Greek tradition, we must turn attention away from the *Comparatio* to his treatises for the Ottoman Sultan.¹⁰⁰ Although he had argued in favour of a crusade in the period before Constantinople fell to the Turks, the definitive fall of the city led him to conclusions that he shared with few if any of his contemporaries and that would even result in his eventual imprisonment.¹⁰¹ For the Cretan prophet, the fact that Mehmet had conquered the last major Christian stronghold in the East signalled that the Sultan was an actor in the apocalyptic end-game that he began to see with increasing clarity and detail from 1453 onwards. If the reign of the Ottoman Sultans prepared the way for the end of the world,

this fourth Plato with Bessarion. Compare, however, the passage in Trapezuntius (1523: fol. Xii^v). Here, I follow Garin (1973) in identifying Epicurus, Mohammed, and Plethon as the second, third, and fourth Plato respectively.

99 “Sed Graecia quamvis quasi ager incultus, calamitatibus pressa, iaceat, duos tamen viros produxit, Ysidorum Cardinalem Ruthenum et Georgium Constantinopolitanem pontificem” (Trapezuntius 1523: fol. Qii^v).

100 It concerns his Greek preface for the *Isagoge* to Ptolemy’s *Almagest* (ca. 1465/6), the Latin preface to his translation of Ptolemy’s *Almagest* (1466), the preface to his own *Comparatio philosophorum Aristotelis et Platonis* (1466), his treatises *On the Truth of the Faith of the Christians* (Περὶ τῆς ἀληθείας τῆς τῶν χριστιανῶν πίστεως, 1453), *On the Eternal Glory of the Autokrator* (Περὶ τῆς αἰδίας τοῦ αὐτοκράτορος δόξης καὶ τῆς κοσμοκρατορίας αὐτοῦ, 1467), and *On divine Manuel* (Περὶ τῆς θεϊότητος Μανουὴλ τοῦ μετὰ μικρὸν πάσης τῆς οἰκουμένης βασιλέως). For these writings, see Monfasani (1984a: 281–86, 491–574). For the Latin letters to the Sultan, see Trapezuntius (ed. Mercati 1943: 85–99) with the corrections of Monfasani (1984a: 285–86). On Trapezuntius’ commentary to the *Almagest*, see Norlind (1966).

101 Monfasani (1976: 131–32).

Trapezuntius saw it as his task to convert the Sultan to Christianity so that he would rule in the name of God instead of the Antichrist. In this way, he could avert the rule of the Ishmaelites (the descendants of Abraham's elder son) that would anticipate the end of the world.¹⁰² If Aristotle and Alexander had prepared the world for the word of God, Trapezuntius and the Ottoman Sultan would achieve a *renovatio evangelica*. In this way, Trapezuntius inscribed himself together with the Sultan in the tradition of Aristotle and Alexander the Great. In his treatises to the Sultan he praised Aristotle highly; the Sultan would be his most distinguished ally against the Platonic Apostasy he saw in Rome. He thus dramatised the Plato-Aristotle debate by placing its main protagonists as he identified them—Plato, Aristotle, Alexander the Great, Epicurus, Mohammed, Plethon, and ultimately perhaps also Bessarion and himself—in an entirely Greek, apocalyptic narrative, climaxing in the conversion of the Sultan to Roman Catholicism and so ultimately in the annihilation of the Platonic sect. In all this, he again twisted the usual humanist representation of East and West, in which the Ottoman Sultan was normally the focal point of antagonism and represented the perceived emergent barbarism in the world.

Being Greek in a Roman Empire, Under an Ottoman Ruler

Trapezuntius' controversial association with the Sultan and the Ottoman Empire conflicts with most contemporary notions of what it meant to be Greek. His willingness to style himself a slave ("δούλος") of the Sultan, for example, clashes with Bessarion's disgust at the idea of Greek slavery ("δουλεία") under Ottoman rule, discussed in the previous chapter. This prompts the question of how Trapezuntius regarded the political situation of the Greeks in past, present, and future. He recognised that the Greeks had been the temporary guardians of the *imperium Romanum*, which he saw as an instrument of God and not a natural or self-evident attribute of the Greeks. Trapezuntius' opinion about the *translatio imperii*, however, changed with time, and was somewhat context-dependent. Although there is no evidence that he ever called himself or his compatriots Romans, he addressed Emperor John Palaeologus as "king of the Romans" ("βασιλεὺς Ῥωμαίων") in a letter in which he tried to convince the emperor to come to attend the Council of Ferrara, convoked by Pope Eugenius IV in 1438, rather than to listen to the Basle Conciliarists. By calling the emperor "king of the Romans" in this context, and by insisting on the

102 See Monfasani (1976: 131–36).

ideally close association of pope and emperor, Trapezuntius suggests that he recognised the king's specifically 'Roman' authority next to that of the pope.¹⁰³

If this was not mere rhetoric to placate the emperor, it seems that Trapezuntius changed his mind after the Union quickly turned out to be a failure. In a letter of 1441 to the papal diplomat Ioannes de Dominicis, he adopted a Latin perspective and argued that God had already moved the *imperium* from the Greeks in 800, when Pope Leo III crowned Charlemagne emperor of the Romans.¹⁰⁴ Trapezuntius explained this divine intervention by arguing that God had replaced the *imperium* because the almost automatic dynastic succession of the Greek emperors had begun to conflict with the role of the pope in matters of imperial succession. By transferring the *imperium* to the Gauls, Trapezuntius wrote, God had eventually restored the pope's authority.¹⁰⁵ This change of attitude might reflect Trapezuntius' changing loyalties: the general Greek rejection of the Union with Rome encouraged Greek Catholics and Unionists living in the West to adopt ever more openly pro-Roman attitudes. Trapezuntius' pro-Roman sentiment is also consistent with his increasingly pronounced prophetic line of thought, to which Rome was central.¹⁰⁶ In any case, it seems that, as a transferable principle of supreme, divinely sanctioned authority, for Trapezuntius the *imperium Romanum* was not naturally bound to one people. After the Greeks, Charlemagne had held it, around 1441 the pope held it,¹⁰⁷ and after 1453 Trapezuntius regarded Sultan Mehmet as the rightful *imperator Romanorum*.¹⁰⁸

103 Trapezuntius (ed. Migne 1866: *passim*). On the letter, see also Monfasani (1976: 49–50).

104 Shortly afterwards, in his exhortations to King Alfonso V of Aragon and Emperor Frederick III to recover the Holy Lands, Trapezuntius (ed. Monfasani 1984: 429, §28) claimed that Charlemagne had been the first to transfer the *imperium* from Greece to Gaul.

105 "Imperatores Romani, quousque imperium erat in Graecia, successione tenebant imperium. Qua ex re fiebat ut minus in eo auctoritatis summus haberet pontifex, quippe qui filium post patris obitum non alium solebat imperatorem declarare. Transtulit deus inde sic ad Gallos imperium ut in manu summi pontificis penitus collocavit. Cur ita? Ut, cum pontifex Romanus ille sit qui teneat, facilius prohibere possit, ne reveletur ille iniquus" (Trapezuntius, ed. Monfasani 1984e: 264, §13).

106 In a letter to Cardinal Bessarion (1469), on the other hand, Trapezuntius (ed. Monfasani 1984b: 171, §36) states that the "seat of the imperium, transferred to Greece, has recently been destroyed" ("haec sedes imperii translata in Graeciam de medio facta est his temporibus"), suggesting that, in 1453, the *imperium Romanum* had still been in Greek hands (cf. Trapezuntius, ed. Monfasani 1984b: 171, §39).

107 See Monfasani (1976: 49–50).

108 See Trapezuntius (ed. Mercati 1943: 85–87, 92–94, 96). This was a provocative statement that contributed to his imprisonment (cf. Monfasani 1976: 131–32). Even when Pope Pius II famously addressed Mehmet II in 1461, he made it clear that he would only concede the

Although Trapezuntius certainly was a “continual lobbyist for contemporary Greece”,¹⁰⁹ there is no evidence that he wanted to restore “*prisca Graecia*” in a political sense, i.e. as a country with a specific territory ruled by a Greek ruler. Apparently, he did not develop the idea of Greek political unity as Chalkokondyles envisioned it (see Chapter 1, p. 48). Nor was his idea of “*prisca Graecia*” in any demonstrable sense territorial, as it was for Giovanni Gemisto (see Chapter 7).¹¹⁰ Trapezuntius’ letters and treatises to the Sultan in particular show that, in the later years of his life, he was chiefly preoccupied with the idea of Christian world-dominion rather than with smaller communal forms of organisation that interested Plethon, Bessarion, and, to a certain extent, Chalkokondyles as well. For example, in his treatise to Sultan Mehmet II which he wrote at his way back from Constantinople in 1466/67 he claimed that “the greatest benefaction affecting all men, not only those of the present, but also those of the future, is none other than the union of all men in one society”.¹¹¹ The empire of Constantine the Great had been a success precisely because he had recognised that since there is one God there must be one faith, one church and one kingdom on earth, and because God always cooperates with the good purposes of kings. Only when the Greeks began to dispute issues of ecclesiastical primacy under the reign of Heraclius (r. 610–41) did their empire eventually crumble.¹¹² In this context, it is easy to see that concerns for Hellenic freedom and resurrection—or the restoration of Greek “*pristina libertas*” as we find it in Bessarion—were, at least in Trapezuntius’ writings, eclipsed by his universalist Christian outlook. While Bessarion was a *Realpolitiker*, probably hoping for a Venetian-ruled Greece, Trapezuntius upheld the ideal of a universal Christian empire under the guidance of a converted ex-Sultan.

Trapezuntius’ insistence on Christian universalism despite his sense of Greek distinctiveness is notable in the context of the almost contemporaneous developments in thinking about Christian universalism and national political and religious cultures. In the fourteenth century, Aristotelian naturalism had increasingly induced Latin authors to accept the necessity of regional

title ‘Emperor of the Greeks’ to the Sultan after his conversion (see Piccolomini, ed. Gleason et al. 2001: 144).

109 Cf. Monfasani (1976: 130).

110 An introductory study to Trapezuntius’ political thought (dealing with his views on the Ottoman Turks in his more overtly political writings) is Ravegnani (1975).

111 “Ἡ γὰρ μείζων εἰς πάντας ἀνθρώπους οὐ παρόντας μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ μέλλοντας εὐεργεσία οὐκ ἔστιν ἄλλη παρὰ τὴν ἔνωσιν πάντων τῶν ἀνθρώπων εἰς ἓν. τοῦτο δ’ ἐν μέρει καὶ εἰς μονοκρατορίαν μόνον” (Trapezuntius, ed. Monfasani 1984p: 528). The translation is by Monfasani (1984a: 494). For the motives and circumstances of his stay in Constantinople, see Monfasani (1976: 184–89).

112 Trapezuntius (ed. Monfasani 1984p: 528–29).

variations in government according to the diverse characters of local populations. The idea was taken further in the fifteenth century by Nicholas of Cusa or Cusanus, a friend of Bessarion at the Roman Curia. Inspired by the fall of Constantinople and the reported atrocities of the Ottoman Turks, Cusanus stressed the necessity of a peaceful harmonisation of all faiths so that the different nations (“nationes”) of the world could eventually coexist in mutual respect and peace. In order to achieve this, he argued in his *De pace fidei* (1453) that apart from diversity of national government, variation of religious rites according to the natural differences of peoples must also be tolerated. So, his idea of Christian universalism was no longer a literal one, but left room for national variation both politically and culturally.¹¹³ From that vantage point it would be perfectly possible to conceive of a distinctively Greek polity within the Christian οἰκουμένη, following its own rites if no conformity in manner could be found. In fact, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, Giovanni Gemisto worked out a similar idea for Greece, as we shall see in Chapter 7. There is not a trace of such tolerant universalism in Trapezuntius’ later works. Trapezuntius instead stuck to a more unbridled form of universalism in which there ideally was one faith, one church, and one kingdom. In such a universal Christian kingdom, he would be able to maintain and defend his unpolitical notion of Greekness, i.e. his relation of kinship (“generis coniunctio”) with other Greeks, his knowledge of the Greek language, his characteristic Greek “ingenium” and “mores”, and his sense of identity with the ancient Greeks. Only from this perspective can we understand how he could simultaneously be a convinced Greek patriot and present himself as the Sultan’s slave.¹¹⁴

Trapezuntius’ view of the Greek tradition, resulting from his anti-Platonism and his apocalyptic visions, adds an alternative perspective to the ways in which Byzantines in the West imagined the place of the Greeks in history. The previous chapter showed that Bessarion saw Hellenic history from ancient Athens onwards as a millenary battle against the barbarians of the East, in which he himself participated. The next chapter will show how Ianus Lascaris looked at Greek history from Heracles onwards as a mission to disseminate Greek civilisation via colonisation and dispersion, in which he himself as a displaced Greek took part. Trapezuntius’ *Comparatio* in particular demonstrates just how central the Greek tradition and ancient Greece were to his view of himself and his

¹¹³ Nederman (2000: 85–97; 2005).

¹¹⁴ On Trapezuntius’ efforts to reach the Sultan see Monfasani (1976: 185–89). See also Zoras (1954).

outlook on the world. In contradistinction to what has been claimed in the past, it is now clear that he did not abandon his attachment to the Greek world and that the ancient Greek past played an important role in how he saw his place and that of his people in history. In his Hellenocentric representation of things, the Greeks had both prepared the world for the word of God and served as the instrument of the Antichrist. In this way, he saw the deficiencies of his Greek people (who were schismatic and prone to the delusions of Platonism), but at the same time went out of his way to correct their errors (via a union with Roman Catholicism and the promotion of Aristotelianism). He was especially eccentric in the solutions he proposed (the fundamental eradication of everything he considered associated with Platonism as well as the invitation of the Ottoman Sultan to world dominion) and their underpinning (viz. that Platonic philosophy had produced all the 'external' enemies of the West).

Trapezuntius' Hellenocentrism was radical in a double sense. It was radical because he never compromised or dissimulated his own affiliation with the Greek world but rather emphasised it in multiple contexts and defended it against detractors when necessary (e.g. against Agaso). It was also radical because he was prepared to reduce all forms of progress and decline ultimately to Greek affairs. The loftiest achievements of humankind were Greek, as were its basest sins. As such, he complicated the monolithic and almost iconic notions of the Greek legacy that are not only typical of the modern age but also of most of Trapezuntius' contemporaries. In itself, however, his Hellenocentrism was the rule rather than the exception. Plethon had transformed the Romans into Hellenes (see Chapter 1, pp. 38–42). His student Bessarion called attention to the crucial role of the Hellenes in the Roman Empire (see Chapter 3, pp. 101–103). In the new world order that Giovanni Gemisto envisioned, Greece and the Greeks held a central position (see Chapter 7, pp. 264–68). Byzantine Greeks in Italy generally stressed the cultural superiority of the ancient Greeks (if not themselves). Most of these Hellenocentric visions obviously served to carve out a privileged position for the Greeks in both past and present. The next chapter explores an example of Hellenocentrism as an attempt to bridge rather than emphasise the cultural gap with the Latins.

Greekness as Cultural Common Ground: Ianus Lascaris' Attempt at Greco-Latin Ecumenism

While Byzantine scholars used their Greekness as a means of social and cultural distinction, they sometimes also used it to bridge the cultural gap with the Latins. Manuel Chrysoloras had already done so in his letter to Coluccio Salutati, congratulating the Florentine chancellor on his translation of Plutarch, as this author in particular revealed the close connection or ancient “κοινωνία” of Greeks and Latins. In this way, Chrysoloras tactically shifted attention away from the more recent past, dominated as it had been by religious and political hostilities between Latin West and Byzantine East (see Chapter 1, p. 35). Almost precisely a century after Chrysoloras wrote his letter to Salutati and took up his teaching position in Florence, Ianus Lascaris developed a similar argument in greater depth in a long speech on the occasion of the new academic year at the Florentine Studio. As if he knew Chrysoloras' letter to Salutati, he mined Plutarch as well as Dionysius of Halicarnassus for arguments to show the ethnic and cultural commonalities of Greeks and Latins.

Of course, Lascaris' situation was very unlike that of Chrysoloras. Chrysoloras had been virtually without rivals when he taught in Florence. The Italian humanists of the so-called *seconda grecità* with whom Chrysoloras had to deal had generally been very well-disposed towards him and recognised him as their principal access point to Greek studies. From the second half of the fifteenth century, as Italian humanists began to teach Greek themselves, Greek studies became less the prerogative of Greek scholars. In Florence, Lascaris' rival Angelo Poliziano was the most eminent representative of an attitude towards Greek studies that was at the same time more self-confidently Latin-oriented and less friendly towards Greek scholars. Some Greeks were even prepared to admit that they were about to cede their cultural superiority to the Latins. Demetrios Moschos—who dwelled in Northern Italy from 1483 until his death in 1519—in a Greek speech admitted that the Italians were about to outdo the Greeks in their own language.¹ Lascaris, however, was not prepared to accede to Latin chauvinism like Poliziano's and sought a way to come to terms with it.

1 Moschos (ed. Stefec 2012: 402–03).

My interpretation of Lascaris' *Florentine Oration* expands upon Anna Meschini's criticism of Henri Vast's assertion that the speech is an apolitical speech and does not touch upon "public affairs". While Anna Meschini has aptly shown that the speech is full of polemical strokes and blows against the detractors of Greek studies,² this chapter adds nuance to the idea that it is first and foremost an aggressive polemical rebuttal of Lascaris' academic rivals or a pure expression of the author's "nationalistic prejudice".³ After placing the speech in the context of inaugural lectures on Greek studies and the argumentative strategies they employed, this chapter shows how Lascaris constructed a form of Greekness that enabled him to share the cultural heritage of his ancestors with the Latins without, however, losing possession of it. Demonstrating how Lascaris used ancient arguments in a new light to demonstrate that Greeks and Latins were like "one and the same people", it shows how he supplemented the blatantly "nationalistic" or exclusivist notion of cultural debt with a more emotive appeal to the Latins to help members of the same *genus* or people. Although, in this, Lascaris tactically exploited the Florentine appetite for communal antiquity and cultural prestige, his Hellenocentrism made him eventually unresponsive to Latin sensibilities regarding Hellenism. As he reduced all Latin achievements to Greek successes, he was unable to appreciate the qualities of Latin and Latin originality. Showing why his appeal could therefore not be successful, his Greekness will be put into sharper focus by briefly comparing it with Constantine Lascaris' *Vitae illustrium philosophorum Siculorum et Calabrorum*, a list with short biographies of ancient Greek philosophers associated with Sicily and Calabria.

Ianus Lascaris' *Florentine Oration* as an Academic Speech

As Ianus Lascaris spoke at the Florentine Studio in 1493, he was not a newcomer to Florence. Born in Eno in Thrace in approximately 1445, he had come to Italy at an unknown time and studied with Demetrius Chalcondylas in Padua before Chalcondylas moved to Florence to accept the chair of Greek in 1472.⁴ Lascaris came to Florence in 1489, perhaps on the invitation of his former mentor. Before he succeeded Chalcondylas to the chair of Greek,

² Meschini (1983: 69–86).

³ Meschini (1983: 83–84).

⁴ For an overview of the life and works of Ianus Lascaris, see Massimo Ceresa's entry in *DBI* s.v. "Lascaris, Giano", with extensive bibliography up to 2000, to which can now be added Schiano (2007), Jackson (2003a, 2003b) and Markesinis (2000) (see also Grafton 1985). For documents

Lascaris travelled twice to the Greek Orient to acquire manuscripts for the library of his patron, Lorenzo de' Medici (in 1490 and again in 1491). Just like Demetrius Chalcondylas and Michele Marullo, Lascaris also experienced the hostility of Angelo Poliziano in Florence. Both men taught Greek subjects at the Studio, both wrote Greek and Latin epigrams, and both were eager to gain and maintain support from De' Medici.⁵ Add to this that both of them lusted after the learned Alessandra Scala (whom Marullo eventually married),⁶ and it is obvious that they were hardly amicable colleagues. In the very year Lascaris delivered his speech, for example, they quarrelled over the relative merits of their Greek translations of a Latin poem about Hermaphroditus, and I will suggest below that Lascaris' speech also was as an attempt to rebut his Latin rival and the viewpoints for which he stood.⁷

Ianus Lascaris delivered his *Florentine Oration* in October or November 1493 as the formal introduction, or *praelectio*, to his Greek course in 1493–94.⁸ In Florence, such preliminaries were held at the start of the academic year in October after the *decretista* had delivered his opening oration in the cathedral of the city.⁹ One year before his *praelectio*, Lascaris had succeeded Demetrius Chalcondylas as the chair of Greek poetry and philosophy. In speeches such as the *Oration*, professors generally praised the liberal arts and their topic in particular (the part of the speech referred to as *laus*), in addition to exhorting and encouraging their students to take up studies and to do their best (the *cohortatio* or *exhortatio*).¹⁰ Apart from introducing the subject, the *lectores*

relating to his biography, see A. Pontani (1992c). N.G. Wilson (2000: 129–32) offers an assessment of his contribution to Greek studies in Florence.

- 5 Verde (1973: 362–64) shows that Lascaris was hired to teach philosophy and poetry for 168 florins in 1492, “quot etiam habuit Demetrius Graecus cum primum fuit conductus ad eandem lecturam de anno 1475...” [*as much as the Greek Demetrius [Chalcondylas] had when he was first called to occupy the same post from the year 1475*]. For comparison, from 1491 until his death in 1494, Poliziano earned 450 florins per year (Verde 1973: 26–28). A comparative table is available in Celenza (2010: 8). On Poliziano's courses in 1490–94, focussing on Greek philosophy, and in particular Aristotle's ethics, see Celenza (2010: 5–17). For the poetical rivalry between Lascaris and Poliziano, see F. Pontani (2002: XLVI–XLVIII).
- 6 Poliziano (ed. Pontani 2002: 130).
- 7 Disliking Poliziano's Greek version of the poem, Lascaris produced his own, vituperating Poliziano's Hellenism in another Greek epigram. See Poliziano (ed. Pontani 2002: 234–40) with I. Lascaris (ed. Meschini 1976: 50–53, nos. 22–24; 83, no. 70) and Legrand (1885: CXXXVII–CXXXIX).
- 8 Meschini (1983: 72).
- 9 Maier (1966: 45–46).
- 10 When John Argyropoulos (ed. Müllner 1970: 3–4) decided to skip the *laudatio* and the *exhortatio*, he explained his choice to do so, which indicates that he at least thought that

in their opening speeches also presented themselves, their competences, and their intellectual orientations, both to the students and to the scholarly community affiliated with the institution that had invited them.¹¹ The inaugural lecture thus served the double purpose of introducing both the professor and his subject matter to his audience. In the first lines of the *Florentine Oration*, Ianus Lascaris explicitly formulated two main objectives. He aimed, first, to persuade the older and more expert men in his audience to foster Greek culture and to prevent it from becoming obsolete, and, secondly, to exhort the younger students to take up the study of Greek by advertising its utility.¹² As the self-declared ambassador of the expatriate Greeks and the informal 'successor' of Bessarion in this role, Lascaris hoped to rescue the cultural heritage of the Greeks. Even more than Bessarion, Lascaris realised that the Greeks were dependent on Latin support for this and had to defend the relevance of the Greek legacy in a predominantly and increasingly self-confident Latin context. While Bessarion had been rich enough to establish a library to house the Greek literary heritage, Lascaris fully recognised that, without Latin support, such a project would be useless.

As a professor of Greek, it was Lascaris' task (more than Bessarion's) to promote Greek studies among the Latins. Although by the middle of the fifteenth century Greek had generally become accepted as part of the humanist curriculum, dissident voices did not vanish.¹³ So, for instance, the Dominican friar Giovanni Nanni, better known as Annio of Viterbo, argued against Greek studies in his famous commentaries, known as the *Antiquitates*, published for the first time in print some five years after Lascaris delivered his oration, in 1498.¹⁴

his audience would expect him to deliver these parts of the oration. The speeches were delivered in 1456 and 1457. In his speech of 1457, Argyropoulos (ed. Müllner 1970: 19) even called the obligatory praise of the subject under study a "consuetudo inveterata".

- 11 Cf. Klecker (1994: 11), who, in her discussion of Poliziano's opening lectures, places such speeches in the realm of the "Prunkreden" in which the teacher not only introduced his theme, but also proved his competence ("eine Probe seines Könnens").
- 12 This division of objectives equally structures his speech (the first part running from line 35 until line 241, the second from 242 until 554 with a succinct recapitulation and conclusion following in lines 555 until 627).
- 13 Celenza (2009: 157). The main study of Greek studies in Renaissance Italy is N.G. Wilson (2000). On the study of Greek and humanist attitudes towards it, see Bernardi (1902), Bianca (1997), Ferri (1920), Grafton (2001), Hankins (2001b, 2003a, 2003b), Hummel (2002), Pertusi (1980), Piacentini (2006), and Saladin (2002a).
- 14 In his commentaries, Annio of Viterbo published and commented upon lost writings and fragments of pre-Christian Greek and Roman authors which he claimed to have rediscovered in Mantua but which were in fact forgeries of his own hand. On his attitude towards

Annio combined his rejection of Greek studies with an extreme form of miso-hellenism, and his work been summarised by one modern commentator as “one big indictment of the Greeks”.¹⁵ Annio repeatedly undermined the idea that Greek culture was the basis of civilisation. As an alternative to this Greek origin myth he developed the theory that literature had flourished in Spain, France, and Germany many thousand years before the Greeks,¹⁶ claiming that the Greeks had themselves derived their “literature and learning” (“litteras et disciplinas”) from the Gauls.¹⁷ Through questioning the authority of ancient Greek authors, and Greek character in general, Annio undermined the foundations of the ‘dangerous’ new humanism in favour of the Roman Catholic faith.¹⁸

Speeches such as Lascaris’ *Florentine Oration* were not directed against men such as Annio but aimed at a more benevolent readership: students and enthusiasts of Greek letters. This is not to say that they were merely epideictic, even though their arguments might seem clichéd in many respects. Cultural bias against the study of Greek and the Greeks remained strong even among Hellenists. Therefore, speeches such as Lascaris’ offered the opportunity to address this feeling of unease and to reassert the usefulness of Greek studies. For Lascaris, in the Florentine context, his speech offered him the opportunity to present a favourable image of the Greeks and their legacy and to publicly denounce the attitude of his rival Angelo Poliziano in particular (see Chapter 2, p. 81). In order to understand the way in which he did this, it helps to have a brief look at the arguments advanced by other Greek teachers of Greek before turning to Lascaris’ argument in the *Florentine Oration* in more detail.

In their laudations of Greek letters, Byzantine Greek scholars often adopted the Latin perspective and commented on the usefulness of Greek for learning Latin and understanding Latin literature.¹⁹ In his *Oratio de litteris Graecis*, for example, Theodore Gazes spent much time showing that Greek studies were indispensable for acquiring Latin.²⁰ He added that those Italian intellectuals who decided “to recuperate and to bring back to light Latin literature” well understood that this was impossible without knowledge of Greek.²¹ “Whoever

Greece, see especially Tigerstedt (1964). See also Grafton (1990a, 1990b) and Grafton and Jardine (1986: 76–103).

15 Tigerstedt (1964: 303).

16 Annio (1498: fol. Iii^v) (from his commentary on Xenophon *De aequivocis*).

17 Annio (1498: fol. Sv^r) (from his commentary on Berosus).

18 Tigerstedt (1964: 306–09).

19 Geanakoplos (1974a: 130).

20 On Gazes’ speech see also P.G. Papademetriou (2000).

21 See esp. paragraphs 4–8 of Gazes’ oration in Gazes (ed. Mohler 1942: 254–56).

neglects Greek literature”, Gazes warned, “will entirely lack this means of help which your ancestors used to draw from the Greek source so as to learn, preserve, and amplify their literature”.²² In addition to this, he alluded to the civic ideals of his audience, by pointing at the usefulness of Greek studies for fulfilling one’s duties as a civilian. Also in this context, he discussed the restoration of Latin literature. Gazes cited Vittorino da Feltre, whom he called “the promoter and leader of the restoration of the Latin language”.²³ Others used the same strategy. Andronikos Kontovlakas, for instance, equally emphasised the utility of Greek studies for understanding Latin in his *Oratio in laudem litterarum graecarum*.²⁴ Especially in the second redaction of his speech, he cited not a few Roman authorities (Priscian, Horace, Quintilian, Vergil, and Cato) who had all emphasised the use of Greek for the acquisition and amplification of Latin.²⁵

Such an emphasis on the utility of Greek studies obviously catered to the intellectual needs and concerns of the Italian humanists. Even so, the gap between ‘we’ and ‘you’, ‘ours’ and ‘yours’ was not bridged, but rather reified: the Greeks were teachers, the Latins students. In order to make this situation acceptable to their Italian audience, Greek professors tried other strategies. Most importantly, they evoked the intensive intercultural contacts between their own forebears and the ancestors of their Italian audience. Theodore Gazes, for example, cited Cicero (calling him “the prince of your language”) as an example of someone who “did not enter the forum before preparing his Latin composition in Athens by means of Attic letters”.²⁶ In one of his *Paduan Orations*, Lascaris’ immediate predecessor Demetrius Chalcondylas recalled that, more generally, the Romans used to send their children to Athens, urging

22 “Qui enim Graecas litteras neglexerit, is eo omni adiumento, quod ad suas litteras addiscendas, conservandas amplificandasque maiores vestri e Graeco fonte haurire solebant, omnino carebit” (Gazes, ed. Mohler 1942: 255, ll. 4–7).

23 “Victorinus Feltrensis . . . nunc non solum propter virtutem beatus, sed *restituendae quoque Latinae linguae imprimis adiutor et auctor habetur*” (Gazes, ed. Mohler 1942: 256, ll. 17–21, emphasis mine).

24 See Schmitt (1971), not without Monfasani (1990a).

25 Schmitt (1971: 275–76). Although Kontovlakas quoted extensively from Roman literature in his speech, his shaky knowledge of Latin appears from his Latin phrasing and syntax and the passages he quoted to make his point. So, for instance, as evidence for Demosthenes’ oratorical skills he cited a passage from Juvenal’s *Satires* without realising that the point of the passage is that both Demosthenes and Cicero *died* as the result of their oratorical talents (see *Sat.* 10.114–32).

26 “Unde M. Tullius, linguae vestrae facilis princeps, non ante ad forum accessisse dicitur, quam Athenis orationem Latinam litteris Atticis struxisset, seque ad rempublicam gerendam multo ante paravisset” (Gazes, ed. Mohler 1942: 255, ll. 14–17).

his young audience to imitate their Roman ancestors by embracing Greek studies.²⁷ In this way, Greek scholars suggested to their Latin audience that the Romans had recognised their debt to the Greeks of their day, and so should they. The close cultural connection between Greeks and Latins was sometimes illustrated by pointing out the linguistic affinity (“conformitas et propinquitas”) of Greek and Latin, as the same Chalcondylas did in his first *Paduan Oration*.²⁸

In Ianus Lascaris’ *Florentine Oration*, all these arguments recur. The general argument in which they assume their role, however, is different. In Lascaris’ speech, the notion of cultural debt is combined with the argument that Greeks and Latins can be regarded as one people, which makes a powerful argument in support of the Greeks. “If among almost all peoples it is a law that the greatest gratitude is owed to those by whom you are educated”, Lascaris claimed,

I would contend that someone of Latin origin will find no other foster fathers, if the Greeks are excluded; after all, the Greek and Latin peoples could be considered to be one and the same, even though the former is older and the Latin younger, because it follows from the Greek. But surely the Greeks seem to have given the ripe fruits of physical and intellectual culture to all men and certainly to their Latin brothers. This alone is sufficient reason why they must be welcomed with general benevolence.²⁹

Especially in the first part of his speech (the *laus Graecorum*), Lascaris tries to bridge the cultural gap with his Florentine audience by pointing to various crosslinks between the Greek and Latin peoples, their culture, and their language. In this, he ‘Hellenised’ the Latins, from their earliest origins in the first Greek migrant peoples to their attempts to preserve their Greekness in Rome. Additionally, he also showed how this close ethno-cultural relationship between Latins and Greeks bore upon contemporary relations between Italians and Byzantine Greeks. In the second part, which is a protreptic *laus*

27 Chalcondylas (ed. Geanakoplos 1976: 303, with English translation on pp. 263–64).

28 Chalcondylas (ed. Geanakoplos 1976: 299).

29 “Si enim apud omnes fere nationes lege sancitum sit, a quibus fueris educatus his a te quam maximum deberi beneficium, quos alios quis Latini nominis particeps, Graecis postpositis, alimentorum sibi ducat exhibitores haud quaquam inventurum contendere, praesertim cum Graecum et id ipsum Latinum genus unum et idem existimari possit—illud quidem antiquius, Latinum, quod sit ab illo, recentius—, Graeci autem animi corporisque mitia alimenta omnibus hominibus, nedum Latinis suis, exhibuisse videantur, pro qua vel sola re sunt omnium benevolentia prosequendi” (I. Lascaris, ed. Meschini 1983: 91–92, ll. 48–56).

Graecarum litterarum, Lascaris conventionally argued in favour of the utility of learning Greek. In order to demonstrate its usefulness, he dwelt on the familiar ideas that all disciplines derive from Greek authors, that without knowledge of Greek one cannot properly learn Latin, and that Greek literature is ultimately superior to Latin.³⁰ In this, he also insisted on the Latin derivation of Greek.³¹ In view of Lascaris' central argument that Greeks and Latins were eventually one people, all these arguments gained new significance in his speech. The next section will show how Lascaris constructed the notion of kinship and cultural affinity between ancient Greeks and Latins and how he made it the basis for the relationship between Greeks and Latins in the present.

Kinship and Shared Culture: The Greek Roots of the Latins

Lascaris' notion of Hellenic common ground was based on the idea that the Latin people had Greek roots. Relying on authors such as Dionysius of Halicarnassus and Plutarch, Lascaris argued that the Latins had Greek ancestors and shared many of their cultural features with the Greeks, primarily their language, Latin, which he regarded as essentially Greek ("Latina lingua Graeca est").³² In order to show the ancient link between the Italian peninsula and Greece, Lascaris not only listed the most important ancient Greek colonies, but also traced ancient Italic tribes and some of their eponymous heroes to the Greek world.

In a rather impressionistic overview, Lascaris called to mind all places on the Italian peninsula that had been inhabited by Greeks. He recalled the eighty cities of Greeks founded by Pythagoras, as Porphyrius claimed.³³ Also, he referred to the colonies of the Pelasgians, the Cretans on the Italian

30 I. Lascaris (ed. Meschini 1983: 99–110, ll. 242–61: disciplines; ll. 262–335: language; ll. 336–540: literature).

31 I. Lascaris (ed. Meschini 1983: 102, l. 336).

32 Plutarch and Dionysius of Halicarnassus were well-known among the Italian humanists, who were chiefly interested in what the ancient authors had to say about the history and customs of the Romans. That Lascaris was familiar with their works appears from the often indirect quotations and verbatim translations in his speech, carefully traced by Meschini (1983). It is also substantiated by the available inventory of Lascaris' library, drawn up by his Greek secretary Matteo Devaris, in which we find represented works of both Plutarch and Dionysius. See Nollhac (1886: 256, no. 27; 257, no. 53), cf. Jackson (2003b) and Nollhac (1887: 154–59). The reception of Plutarch's *Lives* in fifteenth-century Italy is examined in the two-volume study of Marianne Pade (2007).

33 Cf. Porph. *VP* 20–21.

peninsula, as well as those of the Thessalians, and described how the Achaeans had settled on Roman shores after the Trojan War.³⁴ Additionally, Lascaris established a more straightforward relation of direct descent between Latins and Greeks. Just as Plethon did in his memorandum to the emperor, Lascaris evoked the Spartan roots of the Sabines, whom he apparently considered to be part of the “genus Latinum”.³⁵ According to Lascaris, the Aborigines (together with the Trojans often seen as a progenitorial tribe of the Latins) were Greeks, too, from the mountains of Lyaconia in Asia Minor.³⁶ The Trojans and their princes, whom Lascaris called “founders of the Romans” (“Romanorum conditores”), were Greeks “by descent” (“genere”).³⁷ Finally, Lascaris regarded the the Oenotrians (whom Dionysius of Halicarnassus saw as the ancestors of the Aborigines) as a Greek people, originally from Arcadia.³⁸ “The first beginnings of the Romans stem from the heart of Greece”, Lascaris boldly claimed.³⁹

Apart from specific tribes, Lascaris finally also evoked the Greek origin myths of important eponymous protagonists of the earliest history of the Italian peninsula. He recalled Evander, who arrived in Italy about sixty years before the Trojan War, where he established the first settlement on the Palatine and introduced, among other things, the alphabet.⁴⁰ Additionally, he recalled that Tyrrhenus, “your name-giver, the origin of your excellence”, descended from Heracles, and so associated him with ancient Greece.⁴¹ The name-givers Italus

34 Cf. Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 1.13.2 (Pelagians and Cretans), Str. 5.2.3 (Thessalians), Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 2.49.4–5, Plut. *Rom.* 26–27 (Lacedaemonians), Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 1.9.2 (Achaeans).

35 On Plethon's argument, see Chapter 1, pp. 38–42. Lascaris' contemporary Michele Marullo also alluded to the Greek roots of the Sabines in one of his poems, first published in print in 1489 (see Chapter 6, p. 224).

36 I. Lascaris (ed. Meschini 1983: 94, ll. 124–26) with Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 1.9.2, 1.11.1–2, 1.13.2–3.

37 I. Lascaris (ed. Meschini 1983: 96, ll. 153–55).

38 I. Lascaris (ed. Meschini 1983: 95, l. 126) with Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 1.13.2, 2.1.2.

39 “E media Graecia sunt Romanorum primordia” (I. Lascaris, ed. Meschini 1983: 96, ll. 157–58).

40 See I. Lascaris (ed. Meschini 1983: 95, ll. 127–30) with Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 1.31–33, 40 and Tac. *Ann.* 11.14 (for Evander's introduction of the alphabet). In line with Pausanias (8.43.1), Lascaris added that it was in memory of Evander that Emperor Pius Antoninus turned Pallantium in Arcadia from a village into a city and gave its inhabitants both liberty and freedom from taxation.

41 “... Tyrrhenus vestri nominis auctor, vestrae nobilitatis initium, Herculis egregia et clara progenies” (I. Lascaris, ed. Meschini 1983: 94 ll. 123–24). The idea that the Etruscans were of Greek origin is also in Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 1.28.1 and Paus. 2.21.3. Tyrrhenus is sometimes regarded as the founder of Etruscan political organisation (Serv. *Aen.* 8.479).

and Oenotrus were also Greeks, according to Lascaris.⁴² Quoting four lines from Hesiod, he moreover stated that Graikos and Latinos had been brothers of Greek extraction:

κούρη δ' ἐν μεγάροισιν ἄγαυοῦ Δευκαλίωνος
 Πανδῶρη Διὶ πατρί, θεῶν σῆμάντορι πάντων,
 μιχθεῖς ἐν φιλότῃ τέκε Γραίκον μενεχάρμην
 καὶ Γραίκος τὸν ἀδελφὸν ἐς ἄγριον εἶδὲ Λατῖνον.⁴³

And a maiden in the halls of illustrious Deucalion, Pandora, who with Zeus the father, the commander of all the gods, having mingled in love, bore Graikos who delighted in remaining steadfast in battle, and Graikos gazed upon his wild brother Latinos.⁴⁴

In this way, Lascaris transformed all the major pre-Roman peoples of the Italian peninsula together with their eponymous heroes—the Sabines, the Aborigines, the Oenotrians, and the Trojans—into Greeks, who had not become Greek through a process of cultural Hellenisation but were Greek originally, by direct descent from Greek tribes, or by virtue of their Greek founding fathers. With all their progenitors turned into Greeks, the “genus Latinum” could hardly be imagined as an indigenous or autochthonous people, even though as a group, the Latins were extremely elusive in Lascaris’ imagination (see also below, p. 184). Very much like Lascaris and his fellow expatriate Greeks, the Latins were ‘displaced’ Greeks.

Shared ethnic kinship in this way united Greeks and Latins in the ancient past. Lascaris repeatedly construed the kinship relations between Greeks and Romans as incentives for political choices, and this also shows the immediate relevance of such ancient relations to Lascaris’ present. He claimed, for example, that the Athenians had sent auxiliaries to the Romans during their war

42 I. Lascaris (ed. Meschini 1983: 95, ll. 141–42). Cf. Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 1.11.

43 Cf. I. Lascaris (ed. Meschini 1983: 95, *app. crit.* ad ll. 144–47). Curiously, the fourth verse occurs only here in Lascaris’ text and in a codex in Madrid, once in the possession of Constantine Lascaris. Reference is to BNE, Cod. Matr. 4607 (Martínez Manzano 1998: 78, with n. 5; Galán Vioque 2006: 42). The passage cited by Lascaris seems to be an intentional contamination of Hes. *Fr.* 4 (= *Fr.* 2 in the more recent edition of Most) and an adaptation of Hes. *Theog.* 1013 (“ἄγριον ἢ δὲ Λατῖνον”). Note that both passages are cited in close association in Lydus *Mens.* 1.13. The insertion recalls the ‘Athenian interpolations’ in the Homeric epics (e.g. in the Catalogue, where the Athenian Menestheus is worked into the narrative in *Il.* 2.522).

44 The translation of the first three lines is after Most (2007: 45).

with their neighbours because of their kinship (“cognatio”, ll. 130–32). On the basis of the kinship between Greeks and Romans (“consanguinitas”, l. 132), Alexander and Demetrius Poliorcetes had released pirates from Ostia, warning the Romans not to fall away from their ancestors (ll. 132–35).⁴⁵ Similarly, Lascaris’ Latin audience must favour the Byzantine Greeks because of their own kinship relation with them. Lascaris claimed that his audience had sons, brothers, and eventually also parents in Greece.⁴⁶ In the *Oration*, therefore, the study and preservation of Greek literature is not just a question of resolving debts to the most legitimate heirs of a benefactor, but has become one of helping brothers and parents. This is a different kind of cultural discourse than the more technical creditor-debtor rhetoric in the speech for Charles V, discussed in Chapter 3: the construction of kinship between Greeks and Latins adds an emotive dimension to the argument of cultural debt.

Apart from constructing a notion of ancient kinship, Lascaris also insisted on the traditionally close cultural connection (or “κοινωνία”) between Greeks and Latins, using Plutarch as his main model. According to Lascaris, it was on the basis of a Greek education and Greek examples that the protagonists of Roman history had achieved their successes, from Romulus to Augustus, roughly from the founding of the city of Rome until the end of the Roman Republic and the beginning of the Principate.⁴⁷ For example, Lascaris recalled that Polybius had educated Scipio Aemilianus, while “Athenagoras” (read Athenodorus) had trained Augustus. Lascaris referred to this cultural transfer from Greece to Rome in terms of imitation (“imitari”).⁴⁸ He also rhetorically claimed that not imitation (“imitatio”), but only the transmigration of Greek souls into Roman bodies (“transmigratio”) could explain the striking parallels

45 As Lascaris’ source Strabo (5.3.5) recounts the story, it seems that Demetrius and not Alexander warned the Romans that even though he released the pirates due to kinship (“συγγένεια”), he “did not deem it right for men to be sending out bands of pirates at the same time that they were in command of Italy, or to build in their Forum a temple in honour of the Dioscuri (...) and yet at the same time send to Hellas people who would plunder the native land of the Dioscuri” (translation after H.L. Jones). We find Lascaris’ version of the story in other contemporary early modern sources, such as in Biondo’s discussion of the city of Anzio in his *Italia illuminata*. See Biondo (ed. White 2005: 124, ll. 5–10, §3.5). The identity of Alexander (either Alexander the Great or Alexander of Epirus) is disputed (Radt 2007: 71).

46 I. Lascaris (ed. Meschini 1983: 96, ll. 152–53): “Idem et filii et fratres et prostremo parentes in Graecia”.

47 I. Lascaris (ed. Meschini 1983: 97–98, ll. 186–219).

48 Cf. I. Lascaris (ed. Meschini 1983: 97, ll. 186, 200; 98, l. 203).

between Greeks and Romans in the ancient past—and he added, jokingly, that here Pythagoreans might find proof for their thesis of the transmigration of souls (“μετεμψύχωσης”).⁴⁹

Apart from the striking cultural affinities between Greeks and Romans that he found in Plutarch, Lascaris also insisted on the affinities between the Greek and Latin languages. As the ancestors of the Latins had come to the Italian peninsula from the Greek world, it was only to be expected that they also imported their language.⁵⁰ In insisting on the Greek origin of Latin, Lascaris adapted a common idea to fit his own agenda. Although Italian humanists held the Latin language at the centre of their sense of *romanitas*,⁵¹ they generally believed that the Latin language had its origin in Greek.⁵² This idea was not new. In the ancient sources, the idea that the Romans had also spoken Greek was ubiquitous, and we find it from Cato's *Origines* to Lydus' *De magistratibus*.⁵³ The Romans had generally accepted the idea that their language derived from the Aeolic dialect, since it enabled them to associate their culture with the much-admired civilisation of the Greeks.⁵⁴

Lascaris thus alluded to a well-established tradition when he claimed that “the Latin language is Greek”⁵⁵ and asserted that his audience would “not only find back all branches of knowledge through the Greek authors, but also [its] own language (*lingua ipsa tua*)”.⁵⁶ Despite the wide circulation of

49 I. Lascaris (ed. Meschini 1983: 98, ll. 219–25). The Pythagorean thesis of the transmigration of souls had been a point of vehement discussion regarding the philosophy of Plethon (Harris 1995a: 129). As we have seen in Chapter 2, Lascaris applied a similar strategy to an individual Italian humanist (see Chapter 2, pp. 76–77).

50 Also in his epigrams, Lascaris played on the ancient similarities between ancient Greek and Latin. For example: “Combibia ut Graii primum, convivia deinde | Dixistis, Cicero, iudice te melius. | Ac si nulla virum vita, non ulla voluptas | Sit, nisi quando epulis combibiisque vacent” (I. Lascaris, ed. Toussain 1527: fol. cii^v = ed. Toussain 1544: fol. 117^r).

51 See here Pade (2012).

52 See here Tavoni (1986).

53 Lydus (*Mag.* 1.5) mentioned Varro and Cato among the authorities for the idea that Romulus and his contemporaries were very well acquainted with Greek—and especially Aeolic Greek—since Evander and the Arcadians had brought it to the Italian peninsula (cf. Cato *Orig.* fr. 19 and Varro *L.* fr. 45). It circulated in the Greek East, too. It resonates, for instance, in the grammatical tract of Choeroboscus (ed. Hilgard 1889: 134, ll. 11–13) which was much used by Byzantine scholars and later also by Italian humanists.

54 Van Hal (2010: 38) with Schöpsdau (1992). For the Aeolic theory (Aeolism) in antiquity, see especially Stevens (2006).

55 See I. Lascaris (ed. Meschini 1983: 100, ll. 267–70) and n. 98 on p. 191 below.

56 “Ac meo consilio non solum disciplinas a Graecis auctoribus repetes, sed et linguam ipsam tuam . . .” (I. Lascaris, ed. Meschini 1983: 100, ll. 262–63).

the idea, however, the notion that Latin had originated in Greek remained almost completely undertheorised in ancient and medieval linguistic thought. Scholars and *literati* used Hellenising etymologies for literary, rhetorical, didactic, or philosophical purposes, but generally not as evidence for a clear-cut genetic relation between Greek and Latin. Lascaris' Florentine speech is a very early attempt to give more substance to the idea that Latin derived from Greek, making use of the tools its author was most familiar with: ancient and Byzantine etymology.

Unlike ancient and Byzantine etymology, Renaissance etymology was sometimes used to demonstrate historical, genetic relationships between languages. The precedence of one language over the other was 'proved' by showing that characteristics regarded as peculiar to the supposedly ancient language were present in the other, supposedly more recent language.⁵⁷ With his Florentine speech, Lascaris appears very early in the development of this new approach and anticipates some later developments in his historicising view on the genetic relationship between two languages. In order to reveal the Greekness of Latin, he traced 53 individual Latin words to Greek roots according to specific rules of language change that had to account for the transformation of Greek words into Latin ones. In addition to such obvious loanwords as Latin *theologia* from θεολογία, he also cited less obvious examples, such as *fides* from εἶδω and *madidus* from μυδαλέος.

Lascaris' rules of derivation were essentially variations of the classical etymological rules of suppletion, elimination, or permutation of letters,⁵⁸ yet his Hellenising etymologies for Latin words cannot be traced to one single source. He often tacitly disagreed with the older Latin grammarians, as they had usually traced the origin of Latin words to other Latin words. He rejected, for instance, the derivation of Latin *forma* from the verb *informare* as we find it, for example, in a medieval commentary on Donatus.⁵⁹ By the same token, he implicitly rejected the derivation of Latin *lac* from *liquor*, as we find in Cassiodorus' commentary on the Psalms.⁶⁰ In both cases, Lascaris argued that the Latin had evolved from a Greek word through *anagrammatismos*, or to the transposition of letters with or without further alterations (such as the replacement of Greek word endings by Latin ones). According to him, *lac* had evolved from Greek γάλα (milk), while *forma* stemmed from μορφή (form). Like *anagrammatismos*,

57 Dubois (1970: 84–85).

58 Cf. Copeland and Sluiter (2009: 339–40).

59 Keil, *Gramm. Lat.* VIII, 251, 18–19. The commentary was probably by Remigius of Auxerre.

60 "lac dictum est a liquore, quod de interna substantia naturali potius liquore decurrat; 'a' enim in 'i' convertitur" (Cassiod. *In psalm.* 118.70, l. 1193 A).

the notion of *paragrammatismos*, too, was directly derived from the Byzantine tradition, where it was sometimes used to account for language corruption.⁶¹

Even when older grammarians had actually traced Latin words to Greek roots, Lascaris more than once disagreed with their analyses. He was, for example, at odds with Isidore of Seville's analysis of the origin of Latin *malus* (bad), which the Iberian lexicographer had related to "black bile which the Greeks called μέλαν".⁶² Lascaris preferred to 'unfold' the Latin word into constituent compounds in order to explain the relation between the words and their original meanings (the classical etymological procedure, now applied to two languages instead of one). He unfolded *malus* into the Greek combination μή ὅλος ('not complete') and called this "etymology with crasis". Etymologically, the underlying idea was that something that was not complete (μή ὅλον) amounted to something bad (*malum*). The phenomenon of crasis had to account for the phonetic change of the Greek words μή ὅλος towards the Latin *malus* (via a contraction like *μήλος).

In his elaborate etymological exposé, Lascaris steered away from the Aeolic theory that he knew from most of his ancient sources.⁶³ He also found examples in the Doric dialect to show the close resemblance of Latin to Greek. "You almost integrally transferred (*transtulisti*) the Doric dialect", he claimed, "as is shown by words like νύμφα: *nympha*, φάμα: *fama*, κόμα: *coma*, μάλα: *mala*, and similar examples".⁶⁴ Possibly, he had the Dorian connection to Rome in mind here, but there is no evidence that he adhered to the idea, expressed by Plethon, that the Dorians were among the first colonisers of Rome (see Chapter 1, pp. 40–41). Generally, Lascaris broadened the notion of cross-linguistic impact of Greek on Latin from the Aeolic dialect to the other dialects of ancient Greek.⁶⁵ In this way, he created the impression that Latin had derived not from one dialect in particular, but from Greek generally.

61 I am preparing a detailed study of Lascaris' etymological thought with particular attention to his Byzantine sources. A first draft of this was presented at the Annual Meeting of the North American Association for the History of the Language Sciences in Boston (MA) in January 2013. In the meantime, see Meschini (1983: 78–80) and Tavoni (1986: 118–19). On the notions of *anagrammatismos* and *paragrammatismos* in the Byzantine context, see Hunger (1991).

62 Isid. *Etym.* 10.176.

63 Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 1.90.1. Cf. Meschini (1983: 77–78) and Tavoni (1986: 218–19).

64 "Doricam vero integram transtulisti ut νύμφα: *nympha*, φάμα: *fama*, κόμα: *coma*, μάλα: *mala* et similia" (I. Lascaris, ed. Meschini 1983: 100, ll. 275–76). Lascaris categorised these words as Doric because of their long –α instead of Ionic and Attic –η. Historically, the long –α is shared by all dialects except for Ionic and Attic.

65 I. Lascaris (ed. Meschini 1983: 100, ll. 275–76).

By constructing a sense of kinship between Greeks and Latins, by showing their cultural affinities, and by insisting upon the Greek origins of Latin, Lascaris created ethno-cultural common ground between the Greeks and Romans of antiquity to serve as a basis for Greco-Latin relations in the present. This by no means implies that he entirely elided the differences between these groups. Most obviously, they differed in their language. The transfer of the Greek language entailed the danger of language change or corruption. As we shall see later on in this chapter, Lascaris used the linguistic differences between Greeks and Latins, among other things, to distinguish between 'true' Greeks and Greeks 'in the second or third degree' and to maintain the cultural superiority of the Byzantine Greeks. Before exploring how he constructed the differences between Greeks and Latins, the next sections first show how his use of the ancient Greek past manipulates the concerns of his Florentine audience, and how the main argument of his speech rebuts the anti-Greek sentiment exemplified by his Florentine rival Angelo Poliziano.

The Importance of Being Ancient

As were all other Italian communities, Lascaris' Florentine audience was preoccupied with the construction of an ancient and honourable past. This quest for antiquity, which gave substance to claims of cultural and political precedence and was fuelled by competition with other city states, is an important feature of early modern communities in general (either city states, *nationes*, or dynasties).⁶⁶ Needless to say, the knowledge of the ancient world which the humanists claimed as their specific expertise catered to this concern for antiquity and the quest for cultural and political precedence. Humanists were conscious of the utility of their historical and literary expertise to their patrons. In his famous letter about the Roman origin of Florence, for example, Poliziano proudly claimed that through his energies and efforts he had appropriately shown that the subjects of Piero de' Medici were of honourable Roman descent.⁶⁷

66 On the importance of the rivalry between Florence and Milan for the self-presentation of both city states, with particular attention to the important contributions of Pietro Candido Decembrio and Leonardo Bruni, see Lentzen (2010: 75–90).

67 Poliziano (ed. Butler 2006: 8–16).

By the time Lascaris delivered his oration, the Florentines had experimented with various models to shape their ancient past. In these models, the Trojans, Etruscans, and Romans all had played a role.⁶⁸ Without going into details we may just note here that, by 1493, Florence was generally understood as a Roman colony on Etruscan foundations. The Trojan origin myth of Florence, popular in the Middle Ages, had been replaced by a Roman one. Also, the idea that Florence had been founded by Caesar had been replaced by the idea that Florence originally was a colony of veterans of Sulla who had left Faesulae to settle on the banks of the Arno, so that Ugolino Verino, for example, could refer to the Florentines as “Syllana gens” in his *De illustratione urbis Florentinae* (1483).⁶⁹ A republican origin myth was obviously more consistent with the republican façade, and the image of freedom-loving people, that the Florentine elite wanted to promote. As the political influence of de’ Medici grew, and grew more apparent, the republican symbolism ingrained in the Sullan founding myth of Florence became less appropriate. In his famous letter to Piero de’ Medici, Poliziano eventually adopted the Roman founding myth and argued that the city was not a colony of Sulla’s veterans but dated back to the second Triumvirate. In this way, he introduced a myth capable of accommodating less republican forms of government.⁷⁰

If the Florentines were proud of their Roman roots, they had not forgotten where Florence was situated: in Tuscany, the land of the ancient Etruscans, or Tyrrhenians, who had cultivated the fertile area even before the arrival of the Romans. The idea of Florence as a Roman colony on an Etruscan foundation had been promoted mainly in the first book of the *Historiarum florentini populi libri XII*, composed in parts between 1404 and 1442 by the influential Florentine chancellor Leonardo Bruni, and an obligatory read for every Florentine patrician.⁷¹ Bruni particularly stressed the republican origins of Florence, but

68 A concise discussion of the Roman origin of Florence (and the role of translations of Plutarch in it) is in Pade (2007: 1, 105–13). On the so-called ‘Etruscan myth’ see the still valuable work of Cipriani (1980) together with Schoonhoven (2010), who argues that not Giovanni Villani (as Cipriani argued) but Giovanni Boccaccio first introduced the Etruscan myth in Florentine discourse.

69 Cf. Cipriani (1980: 24–25).

70 On Poliziano’s views on the origin of Florence and its principal source, see particularly Rubinstein (1957).

71 Bruni’s *History of the Florentine People* was regarded and acknowledged as an official Florentine history; it was printed in an Italian translation by Donato Acciaiuoli together with Poggio Bracciolini’s continuation of the narrative in Venice in 1476 (Hankins 2001a: x1). Bruni’s narrative about the Roman origin of Florence was recalled, for instance, in

also drew attention to the Roman-Etruscan duality of the Florentine community and represented the Roman founders of Florence as dignified successors of the Etruscans despite the military and political strife between Romans and Etruscans in the ancient past.⁷²

We cannot know in what detail Lascaris was conscious of past and present debates over the origins of the Florentine people, but he must have been to some extent, due to his intercourse with Florentine humanists. In his *Florentine Oration*, he touched upon significant elements of the complex image the Florentines had created for themselves in the century or so before he moved to their city. As we have seen, he touched upon pre-Roman times, and mentioned the Aborigines and the Trojans, who all had their own place on the cultural and ethnic map of the Italian peninsula. Lascaris singled out one of the pre-Roman peoples, or rather their eponymous king Tyrrhenus, as “your name-giver, the origin of your excellence” (“vestri nominis auctor, vestrae nobilitatis initium”). Just as Bruni had identified Tyrrhenus’ people, or *Tyrrheni*, with the Etruscans and had represented Etruscan civilisation as the political, military, and cultural mother of Rome, Lascaris here tactically played on the Etruscan background of the Florentines and Hellenised it. In so doing, he disagreed with his main source in this part of his speech, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, who had tended to believe that the Tyrrhenians were a native people of the Italic peninsula.⁷³

Even though Lascaris alluded to the pre-Roman Etruscan roots of the Tuscan Florentines, Rome is more emphatically present in his speech. Thus, he mentioned many Romans among the ancient forebears of the Florentines. His selection of names is very inclusive, covering all phases of Roman history from its foundation by Romulus until the establishment of the Principate by Augustus. Lascaris tactfully glossed over the question of whether the Florentines were the most rightful heirs to either republican or imperial Rome

the influential *Italia illuminata* by Biondo (ed. White 2005: 68, §2.26). It was anticipated by Salutati, on which see Ullman (1963: 75).

72 On the interrelation of Romans and Etruscans see Bruni (ed. Hankins 2001: 24–27, §1.19–20). Note that in Bruni’s account, the Etruscans are always regarded as respectable opponents and that their final defeat was attributed to anything but their lack of courage and military skill (the presence of the Gauls, internal discord, or adverse fate). Like the Roman model, also the Etruscan myth was adaptable to the changing political climate in the second half of the Quattrocento so that the monarchical figure of Porsenna grew in popularity over the course of the fifteenth century. See Cipriani (1980: 23–36).

73 Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 1.25–30. Lascaris’ version is also the story told by Bruni (ed. Hankins 2001: 18–21, §1.13). There were many other stories about Tyrrhenus circulating in Antiquity. Cf. Luciana Aigner-Foresti’s useful overview article in *NP* s.v. “Tyrrhenus”.

but accepted and promoted the basic idea that they had descended from the Romans. “Especially you”, so he addressed the Florentines,

seem to have approached antiquity more closely than the other city states of Italy regarding your descent, language, and culture to such a degree, that you can easily discern a colony of the Romans [in Florence], if you take into account, among other things, the very name of your city, as it is in my opinion not so much derived from the river as it is from the sacred name of the City.⁷⁴

With his remark on the etymology of the name of Florence, Lascaris directly took up a problem also addressed by Poliziano in his letter to Piero de’ Medici.⁷⁵ Poliziano had argued that Florence was called *Florentia* after the sacred name of the city of Rome, *Flora*, while the ancient inhabitants of the banks of the *flowing* Arno had accordingly been called *Fluentini*.⁷⁶ By insisting on the ‘Roman’ etymology of the name of Florence in his speech, Lascaris stressed the city’s ancient connection with Rome and flattered the Florentines once more.⁷⁷ Significantly, the etymology also enabled him tacitly to connect Florence to both that other New Rome sometimes called *Anthousa* in Greek, *Florentia* in Latin: Constantinople,⁷⁸ and to the city of Athens whose name, according

74 “...et vos praecipue, viri Florentini, quanto et genere et lingua et civilitate prae caeteris Italiae civitatibus ad antiquitatem videmini propius accessisse, ut Romanorum coloniam facile possis dignoscere, si, praeter alia, vel nomen ipsum civitatis adverteris, quando non magis a fluvio quam a sacro urbis nomine contenderim esse denominatam” (I. Lascaris, ed. Meschini 1983: 99, ll. 236–41).

75 Meschini (1983: 86) suggests that Poliziano argued in favour of the *Flora*-etymology or the *Fluentini*-etymology exclusively. Poliziano rather adduced the *Fluentini*-etymology as an additional explanation for the fact that, in some of his sources, the Florentines appeared as *Fluentini*. Cf. Poliziano (ed. Butler 2006: 10). Bruni (ed. Hankins 2001: 10, §1.3) claimed that *Fluentia* was established by the veterans of Sulla leaving Faesulae, and that the name later changed into *Florentia*: “sive corrupto ut in plerisque vocabulo sive quod miro floreret successu, pro Fluentia Florentiam dicere” [*perhaps just through the ordinary process by which words are corrupted, or perhaps because of the wonderfully successful flowering of the city, Fluentia became Florentia*].

76 Poliziano (ed. Butler 2006: 10).

77 On ‘Flora’ as the hieratic name of Rome, see Cairns (2010: 263).

78 Lyd. *Mens.* 4.75; Eust. *Dion. Per.* 803. Cf. Poliziano (ed. Butler 2006: 10). Lascaris was in the possession of a manuscript containing excerpts of the first four books of Lydus’ *De mensibus* (BAV, Barb. Gr. 194), on which see Ferreri (2002). The name ‘Anthusa’ for Constantinople is also recorded in, for instance, Maffei’s *Commentarii urbani*, first published in 1506 (see Maffei 1552: col. 245).

to some, was not derived from that of Pallas Athena, but from *anthos, flora*, flower.⁷⁹ In the very name of Florence, then, Rome and Greece intimately coexisted. Lascaris' general emphasis on the Greek roots of everything Trojan, Etruscan, Latin, or Roman seems to have been a novelty in Florence. In his Florentine history, for example, Leonardo Bruni recognised that the oldest origins of Pisa were Greek, but he did not attach particular value to this.⁸⁰

Although Lascaris stressed the Greek roots of the pre-Roman peoples of Italy and the Romans themselves, he was silent on how the different pre-Roman peoples he heaped up in his speech must relate to each other and to the Romans. As a consequence, the "genus Latinum" itself is an exceptionally inclusive and undifferentiated whole, comprising populations as diverse as the Etruscans, the Latins (traditionally seen as the union of Aborigines with Aeneas' Trojans), the Romans, and finally also the Florentines.⁸¹ For Lascaris, what really mattered was that these groups were all closely related to the ancient Greeks. Therefore, he readily manipulated his sources to demonstrate the Greek origin of Latin culture. For example, he tacitly suppressed different versions of the origins of the Sabines in favour of the version that traced their lineage to the Greeks. Apart from the Spartan thesis, three other competing theories regarding the origin of the Sabine people circulated in Antiquity, but they go unmentioned.⁸² Lascaris did not hesitate to disagree with his main authority, if doing so bolstered his central argument, as was the case with Tyrrhenus (see above, p. 182).

In this way, Lascaris avoided being too outspoken on anything except the Greek origin of everything. He did not present a coherent narrative of ethnic and cultural change from the Etruscans and Latins through the Romans to his own day. He paraded resounding, ancient names he must have recognised as somehow relevant to the self-image of his Florentine audience. By omitting genealogical detail, he avoided the ongoing debates over the origin of Florence and touched upon all relevant founding peoples, making his Hellenisation of Florence as inclusive as possible. This also enabled him to appeal to non-Florentines as well. Lascaris could not, of course, foretell that five years after delivering his speech Annio of Viterbo would play havoc with the Greek roots of the Florentines. In his forgery of Myrsilus' *De origine Italiae et Tyrrhenorum*,

79 Lascaris' contemporary Cristoforo Landino magnified Florence as a second Athens through this etymology in his *Comento sopra la Comedia* (ed. Procaccioli 2001: I, 238). On Landino's magnification of Florence in general, see Lentzen (2010: 185–98).

80 Bruni (ed. Hankins 2001: 98, §1.78).

81 On the traditional definition of the Latins, see Gabriella Poma's entry in *NP* s.v. "Latini".

82 For an overview, see Gabriella Vanotti's entry in *NP* s.v. "Sabini".

he traced the history of the Etruscan people back to the time of the Deluge, exalted the role they had played in the history of the Italian peninsula, and thus fuelled Florentine pride without recourse to foreign Greek roots.⁸³ Against the background of Florentine preoccupations with Roman roots, however, Lascaris' alternative exhortation to Greek studies gives substance to the idea that Byzantine scholars alluded to the deepest concerns of their Italian audience.⁸⁴

Lascaris' *Oration* as a Rebuttal of Anti-Greek Sentiment

Lascaris' emotive argument that Greeks and Latins were eventually the same people showed that the Greeks were not an alien people: they shared their origin with the Latins (Greece) and had preserved their common heritage. Additionally, his speech also addressed other anti-Greek sentiments in other ways. Lascaris' rival in Florence, Angelo Poliziano, himself a renowned Hellenist, had expressed his bitter feelings about the Greeks of his day in the very first chapter of his famous *Miscellanea*. "It is almost inexpressible in words", he wrote there, "how unwilling this nation (*ista natio*) is to allow us, Latin men, to participate in its language and its learning. They think that we possess the scrapings of Hellenism", he continues, "its slices and its skin: they the fruit, the whole, and the core".⁸⁵ Poliziano formulated his opinion about the Greeks in the context of his criticism of his former teacher John Argyropoulos, which is perhaps the best known *lotta* between a Greek and a Latin.⁸⁶ Leaving aside the technical details of the quarrel,⁸⁷ it suffices to recall that, according to Poliziano, Argyropoulos had unjustly attacked Cicero regarding a matter of

83 Cf. Cipriani (1980: 33–36).

84 Bisaha (2004: 117).

85 "Vix enim dici potest, quam nos aliquando, id est, Latinos homines, in participatum suae linguae, doctrinaeque non libenter admittat ista natio. Nos enim quisquilias tenere literarum, se frugem; nos praesegetina, se corpus; nos putamina, se nucleum credit" (Poliziano, ed. Maier and Del Lungo 1971: 224).

86 Sabbadini (1885: 84).

87 The debate revolved around the question whether Aristotle attributed "ἐνδέλεχαι" (continuity or continuous motion) or "ἐντέλεχαι" (complete reality) to the soul, with implications for the philosophical authority of Cicero. While Cicero attributed "ἐνδέλεχαι" to the soul (*Tusc.* 1.10.22), Aristotle spoke of "ἐντέλεχαι" (*De an.* 412a). Either Cicero originally wrote "ἐντέλεχαι" (which was then subsequently corrupted in the text transmission), but misunderstood the meaning of the word, or he simply misquoted Aristotle. For the details, see Cammelli (1941b: 175–79) and Sabbadini (1885: 83–85). On the "ἐντέλεχαι"-



ILLUSTRATION 6 *Tobias Stimmer, portrait of Ianus Lascaris. From Paolo Giovio, *Elogia virorum literis illustrium* (Basle: Petrus Perna, 1577), p. 40. DFG-Projekt CAMENA, Heidelberg-Mannheim.*

interpretation in Aristotle because the Roman philosopher had claimed that Latin was more copious than Greek.⁸⁸ It is significant that Poliziano argued that Argyropoulos' alleged attack on Cicero had to do with his Greek background. As he represented his former Byzantine mentor as a typical example of his nation's insular arrogance, his response reveals how even a philhellenic humanist could exploit ethnic stereotypes in order to discredit a renowned

debate in particular, see Garin (1937) with an exposition of Argyropoulos' and Poliziano's respective positions on pp. 178–82.

88 Cic. *Fin.* 1.3.10, 3.2.5. Poliziano does not specify where or when Argyropoulos aired this criticism, and it seems that, in Florence between 1457 and 1489, such an opinion of Argyropoulos did not provoke “the slightest ripple of controversy” (Godman 1998: 85).

Byzantine scholar and the Byzantine scholars in general (“ista natio”).⁸⁹ Lascaris explicitly argued against ethnic stereotyping of this kind in one of his Latin epigrams against Vergil. In the epigram, Lascaris castigated the Roman poet for propagating the idea that the character of all Greeks could be known from the crimes of only one of them. In doing so, he alluded to one of the famous anti-Greek lines of Vergil: “crimine ab uno disce omnes” (*Aen.* 2.65). “We derive the character of one man from the many”, Lascaris riposted, “while you teach that you may know all from one”. He criticised this line of reasoning as being both unfair (as it harms innocent members of a group) and logically incongruous (as it violates the rules of induction).⁹⁰ Lascaris’ criticism can be

89 It must be noted here that in other contexts, Poliziano was more hospitable to the Byzantines. In some of his epigrams, he lavishly praised not only Argyropoulos but also Theodore Gazes and Demetrius Chalcondylas for their Greek learning. For the poems, with extensive commentary, see Poliziano (ed. Pontani 2002: 57–78, nos. 11–13; 79–90, nos. 15–17; 94–98, nos. 19–20). Moreover, in an elegiac poem in Latin to Bartolomeo Fonzio, Poliziano favourably recalled Andronikos Kallistos, whose lessons he had attended. See the Latin text in Maier (1966: 72–77, esp. ll. 193–98). On his opinion about Manilio Cabacio Rallo, see Chapter 6, p. 204. On the relation between Poliziano and his Greek masters in Florence, see in particular Maier (1966: 24–28, 30–34).

90 “In gentem inveheris, spernis praecepta magistri | Parthenia: nullum deprimit ille genus, | Ne insontis laedat generis. Tu ‘crimine ab uno | Discite’, inquis, ‘Danaos’, quod nihil ad Libyas. | Praeterea a multis qualisnam, inducimus, unus. | Ex uno cunctos discere at ipse doces | Tyrrhenos, Ligures perstringis, parcere cuiquam | Nescis. Me Harpocratem quilibet esse iubet. | Cum larvis certas, ‘defuncto parce’, reclamant: | ‘Respondere nequit, lex vetat esse reum’. | Aio: ‘sed in scriptis nos elevat. Illa supersunt | Ingrati indicium degenerisque animi’” [*You inveigh against my people, you despise your master’s Parthenian precept. He downgrades no people lest he harm the innocent members of a race. You, however, say: ‘Get to know the Greeks from the crime of one of them’ (= Verg. Aen. 2.65–66), but this is not relevant to the Libyans. We moreover derive the character of one man from the many, while you teach the Tyrrhenians how to get to know all from one, you belittle the Ligurians, and you do not know how to spare anyone. Someone advises me to be Harpocrates: ‘You fight against phantoms; they protest, ‘spare the dead. He cannot answer, the law forbids to accuse him’. I say: ‘But in his writings he disparages us. They remain as evidence of his ungrateful and degenerate mind’*] (I. Lascaris, ed. Toussain 1544: fol. 15^r–15^v). According to Macrobius (*Sat.* 5.17.18), Parthenius of Nicaea taught Vergil Greek language and literature (cf. Gell. *NA* 13.27.1, 9.9.3). I have not been able to find a reference to such a precept as alluded to here in the surviving fragments of his works. Harpocrates is a Hellenistic deity of silence and secrecy who is depicted with a finger on his lips (after the Egyptian child god Horus). ‘Be Harpocrates’ is proverbial for ‘keep silent’. The text of Lascaris’ poem is also reprinted in Wallner (1998: 188) and Klecker (1994: 211) after the edition of Toussain (1527: fols. ci^v–cii^r) which reads “nos docet hic” instead of “at ipse doces”, “perstringit” instead of “perstringis”

easily transferred to Poliziano's case, as he seems to do what Vergil taught his readers to do: to judge a group on the basis of one member's perceived attitude. Lascaris' poem is not only a rebuttal of the ancient Roman poet, but a universal criticism of all who use group stereotypes to blacken the reputation of individuals. The general tenor of his speech in Florence equally rejects the idea that the Greeks were an aloof and alien people, but instead shows that they had always shared their culture liberally, as he himself would do at the Florentine Studio.

Throughout the *Florentine Oration*, Lascaris aired a clear vision of the role of the Greeks in history. At the very beginning of his speech, he sketched the extent of Greek colonisation for his audience, chronologically reaching back to times immemorial and geographically comprising Europe, Asia, and Africa. Like Laonikos Chalkokondyles (whose *Histories* he knew well), Lascaris draws attention to the historical role of Heracles and Dionysus that he probably knew from Diodorus of Sicily.⁹¹ He cites the pair as the oldest example of Greek colonisation, which extirpated disorder and established civilisation. Lascaris first mentions Dionysus in connection with India to mark the eastward extent of Greek civilisation, while the Pillars of Heracles symbolised its westward expansion. The southward expansion of Greek culture was symbolised by the Libyan cities of Cyrene (the birthplace of Eratosthenes) and Barce. According to Lascaris, Alexander the Great was the main protagonist in this expansion and stands for the moral and ethical dimensions of the Greek mission. In a passage that is an almost literal translation of Plutarch, Lascaris explained how Alexander had civilised large parts of the world thanks to his teacher Aristotle's philosophy. He founded cities and placed Greek magistrates all over Asia, so that "he transformed [there] wild and uncivilised into a mild and civilised life".⁹² While the Iranian Arachosians learned how to cultivate their lands as a result of Alexander's mission, the Persians discarded both their habit of matriphilia and their impious opinions.⁹³

and "nescit" instead of "nescis" (in which case we must understand "quilibet" adverbially in the sense of *quolibet*). In addition, the 1527 edition gives "insonteis" instead of "inson-tis" and "ais" instead of "inquis".

91 Cf. Kaldellis (2014: 171–72).

92 I. Lascaris (ed. Meschini 1983: 93, ll. 84–103; cf. ll. 94–103) with Plut. *De Alex. fort.* 328e, c.

93 As we have seen in the previous Chapter, the moral and religious dimensions of Alexander's empire had been elaborated with particular force by George Trapezuntius some decades before. In his *Comparatio philosophorum*, he had argued that through the Greek-speaking empire of Alexander the Great and the philosophy of his intellectual mentor Aristotle the world had been prepared for the Word of God.

In this way, Lascaris created the impression of an almost continuous diaspora of Greeks who disseminated their culture not so much for the advance of their own power, but for the benefit of mankind.⁹⁴ He presented the Greeks as an elected people that had received their gifts from God, developed them further, and then transmitted them to the rest of the world. They moreover did so “without envy, as they did not fear that they would make other people their equals, but rather that they would outclass the others less in humanity and kindness than in genius . . .”⁹⁵ Exiled Greek scholars such as Lascaris himself thus took on their missionary roles in the footsteps of their ancient forebears. In this way, he reasserted as well as glorified the role of the Greek scholars in the *translatio studiorum* that Poliziano, in his lecture on Homer, had represented as a principally Florentine or Latin achievement, which the Greeks obstructed rather than facilitated (see pp. 185–86 above and Chapter 2, p. 81).

With his speech, Lascaris tried to kill two birds with one stone. He recognised the fact that Greek studies potentially led to ethno-cultural opposition not only to the subject of Greek literature but also to the Byzantine Greeks who taught it. Apart from the traditional arguments in favour of Greek learning, he took the general argument to a higher level by attaching the study of Greek to the supposed origins of the Florentines. Through his emphasis on their

94 I. Lascaris (ed. Meschini 1983: 93, l. 89–90): “... qui non magis propagandi imperii causa quam beneficio hominum orbem peragraverunt”. Note that Lascaris’ Greek culture myth is almost the exact antipode of Lorenzo Valla’s Roman culture myth in his preface to the *Elegantiae linguae Latinae* (for which see Chapter 2, pp. 74–75). Even so, like his Byzantine colleagues, Lascaris did not respond directly to the arguments put forward by Valla (whose main criticism of Greek had been its multiformity in contradistinction to the uniformity of Latin).

95 “Nec vero in quo primum natura indiguit divinitus accepto tam benignos se exhibuerunt, in reliquis autem, quae ingenio proprio et industria investigare, dissimiles. Cum enim palantes homines collegerint, leges posuerint, civilitatem constituerint, disciplinas, artes omnes, quae ad vitae necessitatem spectant, quae voluptati inserviunt, aut invenerint aut inventas excoluerint et perfectiores reddiderint, omnibus hominibus sine invidia tradiderunt, utpote non metuerent, ne reliquos homines sibi aequales redderent, sed ne minus humanitate et liberalitate quam ingenio ceteros anteirent . . .” [*The Greeks did not only act benignly with respect to the things which they had originally lacked and received from God, but operated similarly with respect to the other things which they had invented with their own genius and labour. After they had brought together the people who were wandering, imposed laws, established civilised life, and after they had either invented or cherished and made more perfect all disciplines and arts that pertain to life’s necessity, that serve man’s pleasure, they transmitted them to all without envy, as they did not fear that they would make other people their equals, but rather that they would outclass the others less in humanity and kindness than in genius . . .*] (I. Lascaris, ed. Meschini 1983: 92, ll. 66–75).

Roman origin, and the Greek origin of everything Latin, Lascaris both corroborated and adapted the communal memory of the Florentine community he addressed. This strategic move enabled him to place Greek learning at the level of communal belonging. At the same time, he created a positive image of the Byzantine Greeks in general as cultural and intellectual benefactors of the Latins. Through his speech, then, Lascaris not only raised the cultural and symbolical value of Greek studies for the Florentines but also invalidated suspicions of exclusivism or cultural isolationism, as aired by his academic rival Poliziano. As Lascaris' speech reframed the mutual relations of Byzantines and Italians through this lens, it opened new avenues for attaining an ethnically and culturally based cooperation between both groups.

Greek Romans—or How Greek is Greek?

Lascaris recognised the Greek origins of the Latins and valued their political and military successes as imitations of Greek examples. He was, however, unambiguous about Greek cultural superiority. He was particularly explicit in his devaluation of the Latin language and Latin literature, mildly in his Florentine speech, more openly in his Latin epigrams. This Hellenocentrism was also the Achilles' heel of his attempt at Greco-Latin ecumenism. Although Lascaris claimed that Greeks and Latins were essentially one people, he eventually did make a distinction between 'us, Greeks' and 'you, Latins'. When he concluded that 'the earliest beginnings of the Romans stem from the heart of Greece', he added that the Romans

were trained through the laws of the Greeks, through the customs of the Greeks. Through *our* disciplines, through *our* arts the Roman imperium was enlarged; over lands and seas Italian fame and Latin virtue reached the extreme borders of the earth through the travelling example of the Greeks.⁹⁶

Making Roman history dependent upon Greek successes in this way, Lascaris in fact denied and annihilated any form of positive distinctiveness for the

96 "E media Graecia sunt Romanorum primordia, Graecorum legibus, Graecorum sunt moribus instituti; nostris disciplinis, nostris artibus Romanum est ampliatum imperium; nomen Italum et virtus Latina exemplo Graecorum usa viatico per maria ac terras in extremos orbis fines penetravit" (I. Lascaris, ed. Meschini 1983: 96, ll. 157–61).

Romans *qua* Romans.⁹⁷ Although the Romans had not acquired their power by a whim of fortune, they had done so by emulating the example of the cognate Greeks. Their main virtue was, in other words, their successful imitation of the best practices of their Greek ancestors. Where they diverged from the Greek path, they naturally erred.

This was most obvious in the Latin language. Although Lascaris argued that Latin was, at root, a Greek language, the differences between the languages were undeniable. He asserted that the early Romans had spoken Greek, but added, as in one breath, that Latin was not an integral form of Greek:

For, as has been said, the Latin language is Greek. The ancient Romans used the Greek language, but due to the proximity of the barbarians it was not entirely perfect. The epigrams they incised in bronze and marble with Greek words and letters may stand as evidence to this, but a better indication is the matter itself.⁹⁸

According to Lascaris, contact with speakers of other languages (from the Greek viewpoint, barbarians by definition) had troubled the Romans' imitation of the Greek language. Lascaris found this idea of linguistic degeneration among the Romans in the histories of Dionysius of Halicarnassus, who had also asserted that Latin was a mixture of barbarian and Greek, chiefly Aeolic.⁹⁹ In the same way, in his almost contemporaneous treatise on the Greek alphabet, Lascaris explained that the letters of the Greeks had been deformed by the injuries of time just as the Roman characters had become disfigured due to contact with other *nationes*.¹⁰⁰ Although etymologically the Latin language

97 "l'implicita negazione d'ogni specificità nazionale e autoctona romana" (Meschini 1983: 77).

98 "Nam, ut dictum est, lingua Latina Graeca est. Graeca enim veteres Romani utebantur, propter vicinitatem tamen barbarorum non adeo integra: huius indicium vel epigrammata esse possunt, quae in aes et in marmore Graecis et verbis et litteris incidebant, sed maius indicium res ipsa" (Lascaris, ed. Meschini 1983: 100, ll. 267–70). Lascaris' remark about Greek inscriptions was not some imprecise topos, but the product of his pioneering interest in epigraphy. On Lascaris' epigraphical investigations, see A. Pontani (1992b).

99 "Ῥωμαῖοι δὲ φωνὴν μὲν οὐτ' ἄκρως βάρβαρον οὐτ' ἀπηρτισμένως Ἑλλάδα φθέγγονται, μικτὴν δὲ τινα ἐξ ἀμφοῖν, ἥς ἐστὶν ἡ πλείων αἰολίς, τοῦτο μόνον ἀπολαύσαντες ἐκ τῶν πολλῶν ἐπιμιξιών, τὸ μὴ πᾶσι τοῖς φθόγγοις ὀρθοεπεῖν" [*The Romans do not speak an utterly barbarous nor an absolutely Greek language, but a mixture, as it were, of both, the greater part of which is Aeolic. And the only disadvantage they have experienced from their frequent intermingling is that they do not pronounce all their sounds properly*] (Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 1.90.1).

100 I. Lascaris (ed. Pontani 1992: 201–02, ll. 61–90).

indicated the close relationship of Greeks and Latins, it thus also marked an important difference between them. For Lascaris, the conservation of language was apparently more precarious than the imitation of ancient Greek examples in military and political pursuits.

Lascaris' purism and Hellenocentrism also meant that he maintained the traditional Greek contempt for Latin literature. Although the Romans had been successful in imitating the deeds of Greek politicians, they had been less successful in other domains, such as literature. While he praised the important protagonists of Roman history as successful imitators of the Greeks, he did not praise the Roman authors in the same manner.¹⁰¹ He praised Roman heroes such as Romulus, Numa Pompilius, Gaius Mucius Scaevola and many others for having imitated Greek examples to the point of becoming "Greek souls in Roman bodies".¹⁰² However, the Roman writers were not all successful imitators of Greek examples. Instead, according to Lascaris, the whole of Roman literature was a futile adaptation of Greek literature. To illustrate his point, the Greek professor unfavourably compared lines from Latin authors with verses from Greek authors in the manner of Macrobius.¹⁰³ Here, the cultural transfer from Greece to Italy is not described in terms of active and laudable imitation (*imitari, sequi*) but in the more passive vocabulary of transferral (*transfere*) or even receiving (*accipere*).¹⁰⁴ In this way, Lascaris clearly suggested that Roman authors only made inferior *translations* of Greek originals, but could not even begin to aspire to the imitation their Greek examples, let alone to equal them.¹⁰⁵

101 On his views on Latin literature see I. Lascaris (ed. Meschini 1983: 106–10, ll. 446–540, with discussion on pp. 81–82, 85).

102 I. Lascaris (ed. Meschini 1983: 97–98).

103 Cf. Meschini (1983: 85).

104 I. Lascaris (ed. Meschini 1983: 108–09).

105 For example, Lascaris invites those holding the opinion that Roman literature is superior to Greek to compare two lines from Vergil's *Aeneid* with two from Sophocles' *Ajax*: "Percipient etiam praeter infinita Homerica utrum dilucidius et aptius: 'Disce puer, virtutem ex me verumque laborem, | Fortunam ex aliis', an Sophocleum illud, unde hoc Vergilius transtulit: 'ὦ παῖ, γένοιο πατρός εὐτυχέστερος, τὰ δ' ἄλλ' ὁμοίως καὶ γένοι' ἂν οὐ καχός'" [*Let them see (leaving aside the infinite number of Homeric borrowings) which of these passages is more lucid and apt: "Disce puer, virtutem ex me verumque laborem, Fortunam ex aliis" (Aen. 12.435–6) or this passage from Sophocles, from which Vergil translated this: "ὦ παῖ, γένοιο πατρός εὐτυχέστερος, τὰ δ' ἄλλ' ὁμοίως καὶ γένοι' ἂν οὐ καχός" (Aj. 550–51) (I. Lascaris, ed. Meschini 1983: 108, ll. 482–88).*

In his epigrams, Lascaris was more explicit about the failings of Latin literature than he was in his Florentine oration.¹⁰⁶ A marginal note in the Vatican codex containing Lascaris' speech reveals that, if he had the chance, he was more openly dismissive of Latin literature. Lascaris' note is an elegiac distich in which he responded to Propertius' suggestion that Vergil was superior to Homer.¹⁰⁷ Lascaris' sarcastic response is as follows:

Nescio quid maius fassus nescire, Properti.

'Cedite!' reclamation: caedier es meritus.¹⁰⁸

You admitted, Propertius, that you do not know anything greater [than the *Aeneid*]. You exclaim: "Yield". But you deserve a beating.

The distich was later printed in the Paris-edition of Lascaris' epigrams, first published in print by Jacques Toussain in 1527.¹⁰⁹ In other epigrams of the same collection, Lascaris expressed contempt for both Vergil and Cicero, the two icons of ancient Latin poetry and prose. In particular, he openly attacked both of them for having scorned the Greeks, their habits and their language. In one epigram, he called Cicero a "busybody" and a "ridiculous consul" without weight.¹¹⁰ In an epigram against Vergil, Lascaris moreover presented Vergil's

106 IJsewijn and Sacré (1998: 112–16). In humanist culture Latin epigrams were a principal medium for personal attacks and slander (Enenkel 2009: 8).

107 "Cedite Romani scriptores, cedite Grai: | Nescio quid maius nascitur Iliade" (Prop. 2.34.65–66).

108 I. Lascaris (ed. Meschini 1983: 106, *app. crit.* ad. l. 439) and Lascaris (ed. Toussain 1544: fol. 17^v). The punctuation is mine. The poem is briefly discussed by Klecker (1994: 211–12), who argues that Lascaris' epigram must be seen as an attack on Vergil rather than Propertius. See also Wallner (1998: 187).

109 I. Lascaris (ed. Toussain 1527: fol. cv^r = ed. Toussain 1544: fol. 17^v). For the dedicatory letter of Toussain, see I. Lascaris (ed. Meschini 1976: 3–4).

110 "In Graios, Domiti, miraris scripta Maronis: | Qui memorem, cur non de Cicerone querar, | Qui gentem toties mores linguamque lacescit | Graiugenum, verbis nec modus ullus inest. | Nil mirum, livor vatis nos aggravat; alter | Nos premit, ut libuitque, evehit ad superbos | Πόσκιον. Haud aliter divum donum insit, et artem | Damnat, quae a Musis nobile nomen habet. | Hinc inde, hic illic sedet is, residetque, vagatur. | Ardelio, consul ridiculus, levis est" [*You wonder at Maro's writings against the Greeks, Domitius: Why would I not recall Cicero here, why would I not complain about him? Cicero, the man who so many times slandered the Greek race, its customs and language—and there is no limit to his words. No wonder that the poet's hostility irritates us; the other one (i.e. Cicero) downgrades us and extols Roscius, as it pleased him, to the stars (i.e. in his speech Q.Rosc.). But on the other hand he*

works as a lasting monument to his “ungrateful and degenerate mind”, especially regarding the Greeks (for the text, see above, p. 187, n. 90). These examples sufficiently show that he maintained the Greek cultural bias against Latin literature.

Unfortunately, no first-hand responses to Lascaris’ Florentine speech have survived, so we do not know how the audience originally responded to his bold claims. As it is to be expected that the listeners were largely philhellenic, it might be that they saw it at least partly as a flattering gesture by Lascaris. At the same time, the idea that Latin literature was inferior to Greek was less likely to meet general applause. Giraldi later commented about Lascaris that “if he had not derided Vergil for being ignorant of his art in an epigram (...), he could have been compared with every other poet of the Greek nation”.¹¹¹ For most Latins, Lascaris’ disrespect for classical Latin literature must have been felt as a provocation. In any case, his epigrams against Cicero and Vergil did not remain unnoticed by Florido Sabino, who castigated Lascaris for them more than forty years after he had delivered his *Oratio*. In his passionate defence of the Latin language, Florido attacked all who, in his eyes, had derided the Latin language and its best authorities. Among Florido’s targets were Argyropoulos, Marullo, and Ianus Lascaris, whom he all despised as “Graeculi”.

Apparently, Lascaris overestimated Italian admiration of ancient Greek culture and neglected the fact that cultural appropriation did not imply full cultural assimilation. Just as Americans imitating European styles do not dismiss their sense of Americanness, so Italian humanists writing Greek epigrams did not reject their Latinity at all (see Chapter 2, p. 87). Among Italian humanists, Poliziano’s chauvinist Latin-oriented outlook was the winning cultural paradigm, and even the most enthusiast ‘Hellenisers’ had to respond to it. When one of Poliziano’s pupils, Scipione Forteguerri, demonstrated the *nobilitas* and the *utilitas* of the Greek language, he deemed it necessary to emphasise that he wanted to avoid the impression that he “as a Latin man among the

condemns the art which derives its noble name from the Muses for it has not the gift of the gods in it. From here to there, and here and there, he sits, resides, and wanders. Busybody, ridiculous consul, he is futile] (Lascaris, ed. Toussain 1527: fol. ciir). I have given “laccessit” instead of “laccessat”, following the text of Lascaris (ed. Toussain 1544: fol. 15v). Zielinski (1967: 353) believes that Lascaris attacks the Vergilian adagium “timeo Danaos et dona ferentes” in these lines.

111 “Hic ergo Laschares non solum Graece et Latine doctus, sed et regum et principum agendis tractandisque negotiis fuit idoneus, et nisi Vergilium in epigrammate proscidisset ut artis ignarum (...) hic cum alio quocumque Graecae nationis poeta fuisset conferendus” (Giraldi, ed. Wotke 1894: 53).

Latins" would praise something alien to the detriment of something familiar.¹¹² Similarly, Lascaris' student Pietro Bembo in his *laus Graecorum* urged his Venetian audience not to condemn him as if he "was treating the Latin language as inferior, while praising Greek and extolling it more than is right for a member of a different nation ("ἄλλοφύλῳ ἀνθρώπῳ") and at that in the most beautiful region of Italy that is ours".¹¹³ Both Forteguerra and Bembo felt the need to reiterate the idea that Greek was an alien language that was subservient and by no means superior to Latin. The dominant humanist outlook was ultimately Latin and not Greek; Italian humanists viewed Greek culture through a Roman lens. Obviously, Lascaris' Hellenocentrism did not accommodate such cultural anxieties that may have been felt by his Latin audience. Even his biographer Henri Vast felt the need to warn his 'Latin' readership not to take the views and recommendations of the Byzantine professor too much at heart. "If you lend your ear to Lascaris too willingly", he warned in 1886, "and as you follow the Greeks, forgetful of yourselves, there could be the danger that you become unable to draw anything from yourself ever again".¹¹⁴

Another Lascaris: Greeks in Calabria and Sicily

There were, however, places in Italy where Greekness could be regarded as something indigenous, not foreign. While there never emerged a sustained 'Florentine Greekness', the situation was different in Sicily and Calabria, where the quest for Greek antiquity was part of a desire for cultural distinctiveness and more political self-determination. What Ianus Lascaris could not achieve in Florence, Constantine Lascaris did in Sicily and Calabria.¹¹⁵ Beginning with the *Annales omnium temporum* by Ranzano (composed in the second half of

112 Forteguerra (1517: fol. c3^r). To legitimise his praise of Greek letters, he then gives a long list of ancient Latin authorities who benefitted from Greek studies in the past (fols. c3^r–c4^r).

113 Bembo (ed. Wilson 2003: 66). The English translation of the Greek text is Wilson's (p. 67). In the remainder of his speech, Bembo argued that Latin could be far grander than Greek, if Latins would perfect their language with a profound knowledge of Greek. Compare Filelfo's emphasis on his Latinity on p. 87.

114 "Periculum sit, si Lascari aurem omnino praebeas, dum Graecos sequeris, tui immemor, nihil a te ipso haurire usquam possis" (Vast 1878a: 32). Lascaris' *Florentine Oration* is summarised in Vast (1878a: 26–32).

115 For Constantine Lascaris' biography, see Martínez Manzano (1994: 6–32; 1998: 3–28). For a concise overview of his life and works with extensive bibliography (up to 2000), see also Massimo Ceresa's entry in *DBI* s.v. "Lascaris, Costantino". N.G. Wilson (2000: 159–62) offers an assessment of Lascaris' contribution to Greek studies in Southern Italy.

the fifteenth century), the quest for Sicily's glorious Greek antiquity emerged as an important element in Sicilian attempts to represent the island as a culturally distinguished region. It has been suggested that in this context, Constantine Lascaris' activity in Messina from 1476 until his death in 1501 helped to shape the idea of a distinctive *Sicilia Graeca* that sought to achieve independence from its Aragonese viceroys.¹¹⁶ He especially did so between the 1470s and 1490s, via a series of treatises regarding the Greek philosophers who had worked and lived in Calabria and Sicily. He probably sent his texts with different redactions to different addressees before they were finally printed in 1499.¹¹⁷

When Constantine Lascaris sent his Sicilian biographies to the Sicily-born bishop of Catania, Giovanni Gatti, he praised him as a direct descendant of the ancient Hellenes.¹¹⁸ In the same letter, he claimed that Sicily had produced more wise and ingenious men than all other islands and even the peninsula of the Peloponnesus.¹¹⁹ In the printed edition of his Sicilian and Calabrian biographies of 1499, Constantine opened his overview of Calabrian writers and thinkers with Pythagoras, who had civilised many Calabrians, Greeks,

116 Pietrasanta (2003: 704–09). Cf. Bianca (1988a: 473–76; 1988b: 152–53). On the genesis of the idea of a *Sicilia Graeca* and its political and cultural implications in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, see Pietrasanta (2003) with a rich bibliography in the notes.

117 The text has been transmitted in Latin, but it seems likely that it was originally composed in Greek; Martínez Manzano (1994: 152–55) conjectured that the original Greek text was translated into Latin by, or with the help of, Lodovico Saccano. Although a critical edition of the text is a desideratum, a few Italian scholars have made valuable contributions to the history of the text (Bottari 1992; Bianca 1988a; Moscheo 1988; Pedivellano 1956). The *Vitae* survive in two redactions, the first comprising only Sicilian biographies, the second both Sicilian and Calabrian lives. The first redaction of the text is known from a transcription by Vito Maria Amico in a letter to Domenico Schiavo of 18 March 1756, but the text survives equally in two manuscripts (BAV, Cod. Vat. Lat. 2930 and Oxon. Lat. misc. e 80, fols. 3^v–12^v). The second redaction was first printed by Wilhelm Schömborg in Messina in 1499 (Lascaris 1499), and an adapted edition by Francesco Maurolico appeared in 1562 (as part of the *Sicanicarum rerum compendium*). The second redaction is most easily available in Lascaris (ed. Migne 1866), following the text of Lascaris (ed. Fabricius 1728), which goes back to Maurolico's edition. Copies of Lascaris (1499) are extremely rare. Dibdin Frognall (1822: 292–93) mentioned a copy in the library collection of George John Earl Spencer (cf. Grässe 1867: 374). The only surviving copy I was able to locate is in The John Rylands University Library of Manchester University.

118 “τῶν ἐπιφανῶν ἐκείνων Ἑλλήνων ἀπόγονος” (C. Lascaris, ed. Martínez Martano 1994: 158–59, ll. 22–27).

119 C. Lascaris (ed. Martínez Martano 1994: 158, ll. 1–7). A Spanish translation of the Greek letter is in Martínez Martano (1998: 166–67); an Italian translation in Di Stefano (1956: 287–88).

and others, and who had also founded the laws of the Greeks living in Italy.¹²⁰ In the dedicatory letter of his Calabrian lives, now addressed to Alfonso II of Naples, Duke of Calabria, Constantine Lascaris wrote in the same vein as in his letter to Gatti that

... Italy, Sicily, and a huge part of Greece are very much indebted first to your nurse Calabria, and then to Pythagoras and his Pythagoreans. For nine hundred years, from Pythagoras himself until Emperor Constantine the Great, this very doctrine and the Pythagorean cult flourished in the areas mentioned.¹²¹

According to Constantine Lascaris, Sicily and Calabria in particular had a distinguished Greek past that set them apart from the rest of Italy. In a letter to the poet and philosopher Juan Pardo, for instance, he argued that Naples was no longer “the colony of the Chalcidians and Athenians, the gymnasium of Hellenic letters, to which the Romans began heading: everything has been lost and is deformed”.¹²² By constantly reminding his audience of the Greekness of Sicily and Calabria, Constantine played on a pro-Greek sentiment in this part of Italy that was largely absent in Ianus Lascaris’ Florence.

There is a further difference between the notions of Hellenism implied in the works of Ianus and that given by Constantine Lascaris, and this concerns their different interpretations of the relation between Greek civilisation and its geographical scope. Constantine Lascaris removed the heartland of Hellenism from Sparta and Athens to Calabria and Sicily and allowed this part of Italy to play an important role in the evolution and preservation of Hellenism. According to him, Sicily had brought forth more wise men than had

120 “Pythagoras multos Calabros, Graecos et alios ultra quingentos reddidit doctissimos. Leges Graecis qui Italiam habitabant constituit” (C. Lascaris, ed. Migne 1866: 924). The idea that Pythagoras civilised the cities of Southern Italy by establishing laws and customs is found in Porphyrius’ biography of Pythagoras (Porph. *Pyth.* 20). Cf. Rathgeber (1866: 485).

121 “Verum illud iterum absque rubore memorabo, Italiam, Siciliam ac magnam Graeciae nostrae partem primum Calabriae tuae altrici, deinde Pythagorae suisque Pythagoricis maxime debere. Nam per annos nongentos, ab ipso scilicet Pythagora usque ad Constantinum imperatorem cognomento Magnum, doctrina ipsa et secta Pythagorica per dictas regiones floruit” (C. Lascaris, ed. Migne 1866: 928). Note that Constantine Lascaris here referred to Constantine the Great as a turning point in Hellenism.

122 “Οὐκ ἔστι Νεάπολις ἀποικία Χαλκιδέων καὶ Ἀθηναίων, τὸ γυμνάσιον τῶν Ἑλληνικῶν λόγων, εἰς ἣν Ῥωμαῖοι τρέχοντες ἤρχοντο. Πάντα φροῦδα καὶ μεταμεμορφωμένα” (C. Lascaris ed. Martínez-Manzano 1994: 162, ll. 50–52).

the Peloponnesus, whereas both Greeks and Latins were indebted to Calabria for its Greek culture. Ianus Lascaris, on the other hand, argued that in Italy the Greek language eventually degenerated and that Roman authors had created a literature that could not equal that of the Greeks. His narrative of colonisation and dissemination suggests the dispersion of Hellenism from an only vaguely specified geographical centre to a wide periphery, in the process of which it degenerated. From his speech to Charles V, cited in Chapter 3, we moreover know that Ianus desired to restore the “institutions and inventions” of the ancient Greeks to their “rightful place and domicile”. Such differences point to a certain flexibility regarding the location of the Greek heartland. The territoriality of Hellenism as well as its future restoration anticipate a problem that will be central to the seventh and last chapter, where I will discuss the way in which Giovanni Gemisto for the first time territorialised, even in political terms, the cultural space of ancient Greece.

While in the past some Byzantines had tried to bridge the gap with the Latins by indicating their shared Romanness, Ianus Lascaris looked at the Latin West from a radically Greek perspective. Glossing over Roman Byzantium, he reframed the relations between Latins and Greek Byzantines through the lens of Dionysius of Halicarnassus and Plutarch. From this perspective, Byzantium was not the daughter of Rome—as Manuel Chrysoloras had stressed—but Rome the daughter of Greece. He did not see himself and his compatriots, in Chrysoloras’ words, as the grandsons (“υἱωνοί”) of Old Rome, but as the legitimate heirs to ancient Greece.¹²³ In his *Florentine Oration*, Lascaris thus employed an ‘ethnological’ strategy, similar to that which Gemistos Plethon had used in his memorandum for Manuel Palaeologus, but now applied to the Romans of the West. In so doing, however, he did not sufficiently recognise the cultural sensibilities of the Latin humanists as his rival Poliziano had expressed them shortly before. While Constantine Lascaris worked in an environment that favoured the notion of a *Sicilia Graeca*, Ianus did not have the advantage of a *Florentia Graeca* and was unable to initiate this tradition. Using the Greek past as a means to bridge the gap with his Latin audience, Lascaris also negotiated between the ‘possession’ of the Greek heritage and its ‘transfer’ to Italy: he shared ‘his’ Greek heritage with the Latins without losing it. The next two chapters will explore forms of Greekness that were constructed outside the immediate context of Greek studies. The following chapter first shows how Michele Marullo constructed a personalised form of Greekness

123 See, for example, Chrysoloras (ed. Billò: 2000: 8, ll. 19–26; 10, ll. 4–12; 15, ll. 3–19; 16, ll. 3–11).

outside the immediate context of Greek learning and entirely in Latin, while his fellow poet Manilio Cabacio Rallo denied that Greekness could exist without Greece. Exploring the Latin evocation of *Graecia* of Giovanni Gemisto, the final chapter then addresses the problem of the territoriality of Greekness that was implicit in the ways in which Ianus and Constantine Lascaris represented the relation between Hellenism and its most 'natural' place.

Greekness without Greece: Michele Tarcaniota Marullo and Manilio Cabacio Rallo

The Byzantine intelligentsia generally responded to the collapse of Byzantium by clinging to the heritage of ancient Greece in the form of ancient Greek manuscripts and the Greek language. The collecting, copying, editing, and translating of Greek texts was their main preoccupation during their displacement, and these activities often quite literally helped them to survive by providing an income. However, the sources are mostly silent about how these Greeks saw their displacement, or the fall of Greece, affecting their sense of Greekness. This is different, however, in the Latin poetry of Michele Tarcaniota Marullo and his comrade Manilio Cabacio Rallo: they did express their visions of Greekness in relation to their sense of displacement.

Taking the poems of Marullo and Rallo as a starting point, this chapter attempts to do two things. Principally focussing on Marullo's poetic persona, it first offers an inclusive reading of his Greekness. Although his 'Greek identity' has sometimes been denied, like Trapezuntius' (see Chapter 4, p. 134), it has also often been recognised and emphasised. Some scholars have taken his poems as evidence that Marullo managed to 'conserve' a native or original Greek identity,¹ while others have stressed the self-conscious and contingent constructedness of his Greek self-image.² This chapter presents a more comprehensive account of the poet's Greekness than is currently available. In order to bring out the complexity of Marullo's Greek persona, it pays special attention to the tension between his sense of displacement and his 'Latin' Greekness, his peculiar vision of the relationship between Sparta and Byzantium, and his opinion of the Roman tradition of Byzantium. The chapter shows that Marullo stresses the survival of Greek traditions, even in Latin and despite of his obvious sense of displacement. Additionally, it brings the notion of cultural

1 See, in ascending chronological order, Zakythinos (1928: 200), Croce (1945: 299–310), Vakalopoulos (1970: 260–63), and generally Kidwell (1989). Along these lines, Deisser (1996) has argued that Marullo's Spartan poems reflect traditional Byzantine stories that his parents had told him during his youth in the Greek ghetto of Ragusa.

2 From this perspective, Marullo's Greekness has been regarded as a means of self-promotion (Haskell 1998) and as a means of creating a 'horrendous alterity' for himself in order to astound or even alienate his humanist readership (Enenkel 2008: 410–15).

subsistence central to Marullo's Greekness into sharper focus by comparing it with the persona that Manilio Cabacio Rallo created for himself throughout his poems. Unlike anything else discussed in this study so far, Rallo's persona inverts the usual patterns of identification and *denies* Greekness. While Marullo's poetry emphasises the troubled survival of Greekness, Cabacio Rallo's persona signals its dramatic loss and suggests that it is impossible to be Greek without Greece.³

Throughout their bodies of work, Marullo and Rallo adopt markedly individualised personas, creating a strong impression of authenticity, particularly for the modern reader.⁴ Even so, their poems should not be read in plainly autobiographical terms. In his famous "De exilio suo", for instance, Marullo suggests that he wrote the poem on the shore of the Black Sea, where he endured the harsh commands of a powerful warlord.⁵ Even if Marullo's exilic persona in this poem does to some extent reflect his experience as a mercenary soldier in Eastern Europe, it must be seen as a literary construction rather than an account of his real situation.⁶ Similarly, Rallo, in his "De exilio", suggests that when writing the poem he had been captured and served as a slave under some cruel tyrant, while living among Oriental slaves.⁷ It is highly unlikely that he ever really lived in such circumstances, as he seems to have had an impeccable career in the Roman aristocracy from the moment he arrived on Italian soil in the 1460s.⁸ The fact that such personas are largely fictitious literary constructions is, however, not tantamount to saying that they are futile in terms of historical evidence.

3 In its analysis of Marullo's and Rallo's constructions of Greekness, this Chapter presents conclusions that go against much of what has been said about the relationship between the relative positions of Marullo and Rallo by Nichols (1993, 1997), who argued that Marullo's poems were about uncompensated loss while Rallo's stance was "less severe" and even Stoic.

4 In the case of Michele Marullo's self-presentation in his lyrical poetry, Enenkel (2008: 396–400) writes of "Authentizitätsdiskursivik" or the discursive strategies that create the impression of authenticity.

5 E. 3.37. For easy reference, I refer to Marullo's work using the abbreviations of Charles Fantazzi in his translation (p. 448): *E.* = Epigrams, *H.* = Hymns to Nature, *N.* = Poems of Lament (*Neniae*), *M.* = Miscellaneous epigrams, *P.* = Education of a Prince (*Institutiones principales*). The cited text follows Perosa's classic edition (1951). Unless otherwise indicated, translations are by Charles Fantazzi (2012).

6 Marullo's autobiographical discourse in "De exilio suo" has been deconstructed by Enenkel (2008). For his use of Ovidian themes in his exile poetry, see in particular Bihrer (2008).

7 Rallo (ed. Lamers 2013: 171–72, no. 1, ll. 49–58).

8 For Rallo's career in Rome, see Lamers (2013a: 137–40).

Their usefulness as historical documents obviously depends on the questions we bring to them. If we want to know the poets' exact thoughts, feelings, and historical circumstances, their poems are perhaps not the best place to start. If we want to know how they constructed their personas and imagined their Greekness, however, the poems are a valuable source. Like letters, poems (miscellaneous collections such as Rallo's and Marullo's, in particular) constituted a thoroughly social form of writing. They allowed humanists to express and perpetuate particular images of themselves, their associates, patrons, and enemies.⁹ They were designed to make an impact upon their readers and to regulate and control the impression they had of the poet. As a part of social reality, then, personas reflect the ways poets wanted themselves to be seen by their readers.¹⁰ With this understanding, the present chapter explores the ways in which Marullo and Rallo constructed their sense of Greekness and places their constructions in the context of what we have seen so far.

Marullo and Rallo: Two Atypical *dotti bizantini*

Scholarship has not reached consensus about Michele Marullo's exact place and year of birth, although we know for sure that he died in 1500, trying to cross the river Cecina near Volterra. Marullo was slightly younger than Manilio Rallo, who was born around 1447.¹¹ Although Marullo's place of birth is unknown

9 For this aspect of letter writing in humanist culture, see Van Houdt et al. (2002: 3).

10 In the case of Marullo's poems, Haskell (1998: 112) stressed that it is not naïve to search for the "socio-historical Marullus", provided that such research is based on the assumption that his poems are "highly crafted and self-conscious, thus rhetorical in one modern sense of the word, but also in the more fundamental sense of being largely directed to specific political ends". This approach to his persona (taken further by Enenkel 2008) entails an implicit criticism of earlier approaches to Marullo's poetry, e.g. those of Dionysios A. Zakythinos, Benedetto Croce, and more recently Carol Kidwell, who all in their own ways took the epigrams as more or less straightforward reflections of the poet's inner world and external, historical circumstances (see n. 1 on p. 200 for the references).

11 Some have argued that Marullo was born in Constantinople before 1453; others claimed that he saw the light of day in Mistra or in Italy after the fall of Constantinople, probably in 1456–58 (the more likely date). An excellent introduction to Marullo's life, with relevant sources and bibliography up to 2001, is the entry of Donatella Coppini in *DBI* s.v. "Marullo Tarcaniota, Michele". For additional bibliography, see Guillot (2012: 828–34) and Lamers (2014b). Lamers (2013a) offers a first tentative bio-bibliography of Cabacio Rallo. Apart from this, the main examinations of Rallo's life and work are Altamura (1947, 1956), Nichols (1993, 1997), and Lamers (2008, 2012a). See also Manoussos Manoussakas' entry in *DBI* s.v. "Cabacio Rallo, Manilio".

(though it might have been the Peloponnesus), Rallo came from Mistra, from where he followed his father Demetrios Raoul Kavakes (see Chapter 1, pp. 44–45) to Italy in the early 1460s. As Marullo and Rallo came to Italy with their families at a young age, it is likely that they received much of their educations there. Otherwise, they lived very different lives. As a mercenary soldier, Marullo led the life of a learned vagabond and lived in many different places, never really settling down. Rallo, by contrast, spent most of his life in Rome (56 years in 1520, according to his own count) and held various administrative and ceremonial posts in the Roman aristocracy (including the papal court). If they did not meet earlier, the two men probably did so in the Neapolitan circle of Gioviano Pontano,¹² whom Rallo regarded as the most competent judge of Latin style aside from Marullo.¹³ Marullo addressed several poems to his compatriot, in which he cordially addresses him as “bone Rhalle” and “Malli” (*E.* 1.63. 21, 3.57.1) and cites him as an expert in epigrams (*E.* 1.16.7).¹⁴ They probably met again in Rome in the later 1480s, shortly before Marullo left for Florence, where he stayed, with intermissions, from 1489 to 1497.¹⁵ He was associated with the entourage of Lorenzo di Pierfrancesco de’ Medici and knew Demetrius Chalcondylas (who published his Homer edition there in 1489) and Ianus Lascaris (who succeeded Chalcondylas at the chair of Greek in 1492).¹⁶ Like the latter, Marullo quarrelled with Poliziano on philological issues and matters of literary style (such as the correct interpretation of Catullus 66.65–68).¹⁷ While Marullo dwelled in Florence, Rallo stayed in Rome and lived in close association with the della Rovere households and the papal court. After Marullo’s death in 1500, Rallo was part of the *familiae* of Julius II

12 See here Lamers (2013a: 144–47).

13 In his dedicatory letter of his *Iuveniles ingenii lusus* (1520) Rallo calls Pontano and Marullo “in poesi et oratoria primariis ac secretioris doctrinae viri” (cited from Lamers 2013a: 169, ll. 23–24).

14 Marullo’s *E.* 1.55 is also addressed to Rallo.

15 For his time in Rome and Florence, see Kidwell (1989: 141–77).

16 He wrote an epigram to both of them: *E.* 3.5 and *E.* 4.6.

17 Marullo’s poems against Poliziano (called “Ecnomus”) are *E.* 3.11 (on the correct name of Oarion in Catullus 66), *E.* 3.27 (about the reading “crepidas . . . carcopinas” in Catullus 98.4), *E.* 3.29 (about the Greek equivalent of Latin “ineptus”), *E.* 3.39 (about “supernata” in Catullus 17.19), *E.* 3.45 (about the use of the word “melos” in Homer), and *M.* 1 (on the correct interpretation of Catullus 66.65–8). In his disputes with Poliziano, Marullo was mostly wrong. Other poems concerning Poliziano are *E.* 3.19 (about Poliziano’s ugly appearance and repellent character), *E.* 3.50 (about Poliziano’s polemical character and his scorn for the Greeks), and *E.* 4.15 (on the futility of Poliziano’s learning and his faulty knowledge of Latin metre).

and his successor Leo X, who made him titular bishop of Monemvasia, a post he held until 1520, a few years before his death.¹⁸

Despite the obvious differences between the two, Marullo and Rallo share that they were no *dotti bizantini* of the regular kind. Unlike most of their fellow Greeks, such as Chalcondylas and Lascaris, they held no teaching positions and did not substantially contribute to the transmission and dissemination of Greek learning as copyists or editors. Instead, they immersed themselves in Latin literature. Marullo, for instance, was an ardent student of Lucretius, and some of his emendations still feature in modern editions. Moreover, during their own lives, they were mainly known as Latin poets. As far as we know, they did not write Greek poems, despite Giovio's later assertion that Marullo did.¹⁹ This is notable in view of the fact that most other Greeks in Italy continued to write in Greek. The almost exclusive devotion of Rallo and Marullo to Latin is also striking given the widespread anti-Latin bias among the Greeks. Although they wrote Latin when necessary, they also insisted that Greek was a superior means of expression: the previous chapter showed that even Ianus Lascaris, who himself wrote Latin epigrams, regarded Latin literature as inferior to that in Greek.

Although Marullo is now the more famous poet, contemporaries did appreciate Cabacio Rallo's poetry as well.²⁰ One of his admirers expressed his wonder that "a man, born in Sparta, could speak the Roman tongue so graciously".²¹ Rallo was one of the very few Greeks who had the honour of being valued for his Latin learning by Angelo Poliziano.²² Marullo's poetic production is more vast and diverse than that of his comrade. If Rallo was (as I now believe) not the editor of Paul the Deacon's epitome of Festus,²³ the only work he published in print was a selection of Latin poems, dedicated to Cardinal Giulio de' Medici. This book, the *Iuveniles ingenii lusus*, was printed twenty years after Marullo's death, in 1520, and contains poems of various lengths, metres, and subjects, typical of its time and place. Although most poems in this collection are demonstrably older, and were previously circulated in manuscripts, by no

18 For Rallo's positions at the papal court, see Lamers (2013a: 138–40).

19 Giovio (1577: 35) (cf. Giovio, ed. Mereghazzi 1972: 61).

20 For some testimonies, see Lamers (2013a: 128, n. 3).

21 This was Tranquillo Gravina. The Latin text is available in Lamers (2013a: 199).

22 "Graecus homo sed Latinis litteris adprime excultus" (Poliziano, ed. Maier and Del Lungo 1971: 284).

23 See here Chapter 2, p. 70, n. 35 and Lamers (2013b).

means are all of them 'juvenile', as the title suggests.²⁴ Marullo, on the other hand, printed his first two books of epigrams ca. 1488/89 in Rome and dedicated them to Lorenzo di Pierfrancesco, shortly before he moved to Florence. Almost ten years later, in 1497, he published a revised edition supplemented with two more books of epigrams and his *Hymni naturales* in Florence. This set of hymns to the ancient gods in four books and in various metres, dedicated to Antonello Sanseverino (the prince of Salerno), is probably his most ambitious work. Unlike his epigrams, they have been the subject of intensive research.²⁵ Marullo's poems of lament or *Neniae* remained unpublished during his life, while his *Institutiones principales* were never finished.

One of the central themes running through the poems of both Marullo and Rallo is their displacement from Greece.²⁶ For both of them, this exile ("exilium") was a shameful condition to live in, and they lamented the loss of benefits and honours that came with it. Rallo complained that, with his displacement, his family's honour ("gentis honos"), his family properties ("census avitus"), and his ancestral home ("materno stemmate fulta domus") had perished, and that he had become a disgrace ("obprobrium").²⁷ In strikingly similar fashion, Marullo lamented that, in exile, he was a laughing-stock ("ludibrium"), having lost his "dignity of origin and family" ("generis decus omne domusque"), and that his glorious lineage and "house founded on illustrious titles" ("antiquis fulcta domus titulis") were no longer of any worth or value. In the same poem, he moreover stated that it was worse to live in exile than to serve the Ottoman Sultan and suffer with his fatherland, and in one of his *Neniae*, he insisted that no one should disdain to share the sufferings of his own country.²⁸ However,

24 A collection of Rallo's poems was probably dedicated to Cardinal Galeotto Franciotti della Rovere between 1505 and 1507 (now SB, Cod. Ham. 561; cf. Boese 1966: b275–276 and Kristeller 1983: 367). The only printed collection is the one entitled *Iuveniles ingenii lusus*, published in Naples in 1520 (cf. Legrand 1903: 258–63). Additionally, some of Rallo's shorter poems were collected in various miscellaneous collections. An initial, inventory-taking study of the sources for Rallo's poetry is Lamers (2013a: 148–67).

25 Unlike Marullo's epigrams and other poetry, his *Hymns* have generated extensive scholarship. See in particular Chines (1988), Chomarat (1995), Ciceri (1914), Coppini (1995: 11–33), Ford (1985), Goffis (1969), Harrauer (1994, 1996), Kidwell (1989: 186–200), Ludwig (1992), Schonberger (1996), Tateo (1967), Thurn (1998).

26 The main discussions of exile or displacement in Marullo's poetry are Bihrer (2008), Del Mar (2008), Enenkel (2008: 368–428), Haskell (1998), Nichols (1997).

27 Rallo (ed. Lamers 2013: 171, no. 1, ll. 20, 29–32).

28 *E.* 3.37.10–18, *N.* 1.1.40–42. In view of Marullo's general insistence upon the shame of living in exile, I find it (unlike Bihrer 2008 and Enenkel 2008) difficult to see how the poet would

in one of his hymns, Marullo also expressed the idea that, thanks to his Latin poems, his exile never became shameful (“turpis”) or idle (“iners”, *H.* 2.8.11) and thanked Mercury for this, his poetic guide and “sweet solace of exile and of [his] conquered native land”.²⁹ He repeatedly rejected the lamentations common to exile poetry in the tradition of Ovid.³⁰ Rallo, by contrast, exploited the topos of exilic lament fully and took one of its tenets to extremes. In his poetry, he developed the Ovidian “pose of poetic decline” into a process of full cultural decline that, in his view, had led to the complete annihilation of his Greekness.³¹ Before exploring Rallo, the next two sections first analyse in more detail how Marullo constructed a distinctive sense of Greekness and how he presented himself as a carrier of Greek learning and virtue throughout his poetry.

Exile, Hellenism, and Latinity in Marullo's Hymns

Marullo's poet-persona has been said to be organised around a double sense of absence: the absence of a native country and the absence of a native language.³² Unlike Cabacio Rallo, however, Marullo also suggested in various ways that he carried with him a long-standing Greek tradition, which he claimed to preserve and cherish, even in exile far from his country and even in Latin. For Marullo, Latin was a means to recreate what was lost, or rather to

identify with Aeneas to legitimise his own exile in “De exilio suo”: the Trojan hero is an example of those who flee and live in foreign lands instead of remaining in the homeland to die in its defence or to suffer together with its citizens. In *E.* 2.16, Marullo cites Aeneas and Teucer as examples of great men who suffered exile because of *how* they survived its hardships, not because of the very fact they lived their lives in exile. *E.* 3.22 moreover praises Aeneas for rescuing his old father.

29 *H.* 2.8.69–72.

30 Marullo stressed the uselessness of lamenting exile in his consolations for Francesco Nino of Siena (*E.* 2.16) and Manilio Rallo (*E.* 1.63) and praises his uncle Paul Tarchaniotes for remaining undefeated by the weight of his displacement (*E.* 4.29). Even in his *Neniae*, Marullo stated that it would be shameful to complain of personal misfortunes such as exile (see *N.* 1.1.35–8). In the final lines of “De exilio suo” (*E.* 3.37.47–8), Marullo's mention of “Euxinus” and “lacrimae” can be read as alluding to Ovid's *Epistolae ex Ponto* and *Tristia* (Bihrer 2008: 20). Unlike Bihrer, I think we may read here a criticism rather than an imitation of Ovidian exile poetry: the Greeks will expiate their guilt as long as an Ovidian approach to displacement (“Euxinus et lacrimae”) consumes them.

31 Williams (1994: 50–52).

32 Nichols (1997: 160).



ILLUSTRATION 7 *Tobias Stimmer, portrait of Michele Tarcaniota Marullo. From Paolo Giovio, Elogia virorum literis illustrium (Basle: Petrus Perna, 1577), p. 36. DFG-Projekt CAMENA, Heidelberg-Mannheim.*

create what he apparently *perceived* as lost. All the same, this does not entail a simple reliance on Greek traditions. Scholarship has often tended to take its cue from Marullo's own suggestions and look for 'native' Greek traditions his poetry would reflect, ranging from folk tales about Spartan heroism to the renewed cult of the ancient gods often associated with Plethon. However, the very fact that Marullo wrote in Latin instead of Greek puts him in a Latin rather than a Greek context and links him to the interests he shared with his Latin audience, rather than with some allegedly well-established Byzantine Greek traditions.

Marullo's *Hymni naturales* in particular illustrate this. In his hymns, the poet explicitly presents himself as the carrier of ancient Greek wisdom. In one of his hymns, he explains that he narrated or even "brought back" ("referre")

the “*patria sacra*”, or “sacred things of his country”.³³ In the same passage, he emphasises that he is singing as an exile (“*exul*”) in a non-Greek language (“*non Pelasga voce*”) and bringing the Orphic rhythms to Florence. Suggesting that he is the first (“*primus*”) in so many centuries to sing hymns to the ancient gods, Marullo’s persona uniquely mediates a long-forgotten Greek tradition in Latin.³⁴

In reality, however, Marullo’s hymns are unprecedented. The first book of these hymns is about the extracelestial realm and contains hymns to Jupiter Optimus Maximus, Pallas, Amor, the Heavenly Beings, Eternity, and Bacchus. The second book concerns the lower heavenly bodies, including Pan, Heaven, the Stars, Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Venus, and Mercury. The third descends further, with hymns to the Sun and the Moon. The fourth and final book concerns the sublunar world and features hymns to Aether, Jupiter Fulgerator (i.e. as hurler of the thunderbolt), Juno, Ocean, and Earth. Although the hymns contain much traditional material from Greek and Latin literature, Marullo makes his own connections and even invents some of the myths he suggests are ‘traditional’.³⁵ The scholarship has made it abundantly clear that the content of the hymns does not reflect one single school of thought, if it can be regarded as representing a coherent philosophical programme at all.

This is not the place to dwell on the philosophical intricacies of these hymns or to ask how serious the poet was in his evocations (or invocations?) of the ancient gods.³⁶ What interests me here is precisely the fact that Marullo

33 It must be noted that “*patria sacra*” does not necessarily refer to the “sacred things of his country”. In a poem to Pico della Mirandola (*E.* 3.7), Marullo refers to the “*secreta patrum antra*”, meaning ancient wisdom generally. However, the context of the hymn (see the next note) shows that, in the *Hymni naturales*, Marullo is suggesting a specifically Greek tradition.

34 “Ergo restabat mihi—proh, deorum | Rex bone!—hoc fatis etiam malignis, | Patria ut Graecus sacra non Pelasga | Voce referrem, | Quique tot saeculis tripodas silentes | Primus Orpheo pede rite movi, | Exul Etrusci streperem sonanda | Vallibus Arni . . .” [So it was my destiny—ah! good king of the gods—so this too was willed by the spiteful fates—that I, a Greek, should narrate the sacred things of my country in a non-Pelasgian voice, and that I, who first roused the tripods, silent for so many centuries, in an orphic rhythm, as an exile, should make the valleys of the Etruscan Arno resound with my loud song.] (*H.* 2.8.1–8).

35 Fantazzi (2012: XII).

36 I personally tend to think that, philosophically, we must see Marullo’s hymns in the context of Florentine concordism (developed by Ficino and Pico) rather than Plethon’s neopaganism (if there was such a thing). The poet’s appropriation of Ficino’s ideas has been sufficiently demonstrated and appears, among other things, in Marullo’s selection from the Orphic corpus, the Platonist order of his universe, the importance attached to the Sun, his glorification of the celestial substance (aether), the interpretation of specific myths

represents himself in a Greek tradition that is largely self-made and has no obvious precedents. Unlike many of his contemporaries, such as Demetrius Chalcondylas and Ianus Lascaris, he did not transmit or disseminate the heritage of ancient Greece through copying, editing, translating, or teaching Greek classics. The way in which Marullo deals with the Greek tradition rather recalls the work of George Trapezuntius who, from a divergent philosophical position in his *Comparatio*, created the notion of a Greek tradition that reached from ancient Greece to his own day. Like Marullo, Trapezuntius also saw an active role for himself in this Greek tradition, which went beyond the traditional means of transmission and dissemination of Greek learning. Whereas Trapezuntius placed himself in a continuous chain of Greek history, connecting past and present, Marullo suggests that he single-handedly *revived* a long-forgotten Greek tradition. Trapezuntius moreover stressed an ongoing Greek-Christian tradition, but Marullo claimed to recover a decidedly pre-Christian tradition inspired by Platonism rather than by Aristotelianism: Trapezuntius would have agreed with the severe judgements of Marullo's later critics such as Erasmus, and would perhaps even have counted him as a fifth Plato among the Greek *monstra* (see Chapter 4, p. 140, with n. 27).

In his hymns, Marullo not only famously evoked the "patria sacra", but also created an image of his lost country. Although he did not imagine his country with the quasi-cartographical specificity of Giovanni Gemisto's imaginary Greece, which will be discussed in the next chapter, he did set his poems in distinctively Greek landscapes or place them in scenes from Greek history. The hymns abound with Greek places, rivers, and mountains (e.g. the Olympus and Mount Lycaeus, the Strymon River and Mount Rhodope, Delphi and the Hyperion River, and Arcadia), and references to monuments are not infrequent (e.g. the temples of Cyprus and a "Graia palaestra" in his hymn to Mercury).³⁷ Additionally, Marullo recalls protagonists of Greek history: Odysseus, Codrus, and Alexander the Great, among others.³⁸ In his hymn to the Sun (*H.* 3.1), central to the collection, he went through some significant places and stages of

worked into his poems, and his admiration for the Orphic hymns (Ludwig 1992: 27–35). On the intellectual background of the hymns in Italy, see esp. Schönberger (1996: 7–19), Harrauer (1995: xviii–xxxiv), and Ludwig (1992: 25–75). Pantin (2006: 253) and Fantazzi (2012: xiv) also mention Pontano's *Urania* as an example for Marullo's hymns.

37 See (in order of appearance in the main text) *H.* 2.1.4, 2.1.23, 2.6.27, 2.6.5, 2.8.9, 3.1.25, 4.2.12, 2.7.59–60, 2.8.53. For the notion of Greece in Marullo's poetry, see also Mariotti (2010).

38 See *H.* 3.1.159, 2.6.1, 3.1.214–18.

Greek history: the oracle of Delphi, the voyages of Odysseus, the conquests of Alexander the Great, and the fall of Constantinople.³⁹

Through his hymns, then, Marullo created a powerful image of the Greek legacy as a continuing presence despite his displacement from Greece and despite the fact that he was forced to use Latin as his primary language of expression.⁴⁰ Just as he had previously used a ‘Scythian’ language in his exile (or so he claimed in Ovidian fashion: *H.* 2.8.15–6), Marullo now used Latin to evoke the legacy of his country: “if not in the blessed language of my country, I shall sing of you [Mercury] in the language that is permitted to me”.⁴¹ The fact that he wrote his hymns, like all of his poetry, in Latin is significant if we assume that it was a deliberate choice. Unlike most of his compatriots, who tried to conserve the Greek heritage for their fellow Greeks, Marullo’s project primarily addressed a Latin audience. This strongly suggests that his poetry was principally informed by interests he shared with his Latin audience, which places him in the creative, concordist Florentine context of Pico della Mirandola (whom he admired) rather than in an alleged Greek tradition directly leading back to Plethon. Moreover, the poet claimed to write for an unspecified audience in the remote future who would acknowledge and recognise the Greeks as carriers of ancient wisdom thanks to his poems.⁴² In the 1460s, Laonikos had written his Greek history in Greek because he believed that the language would be restored to its former glory. Marullo’s use of Latin as the language of the future suggests something different and places his cultural project in a different light: perhaps he, unlike Chalkokondyles, saw the survival of the Greek heritage in a Latin-oriented world rather than a Greek kingdom. At the same time, however, Marullo did not cede the Greek heritage to the Latins. Poliziano claimed that Greece had moved to Florence (see Chapter 2, p. 81), but Marullo, by presenting himself, in his hymns, as an original interpreter of Hellenic wisdom, did not abandon his claims to the Greek legacy even in exile. Moreover, he derived pride from his identification with this legacy.

Beyond its role in conveying a central aspect of the Greek heritage, Marullo also regarded his Latin poetry as affirming Greek cultural pride and glory,

39 As he wrote in Latin, obviously, Marullo also used images connected with the Latin tradition. The hymn to Saturn, for instance, takes as its starting point the Saturnalia, a Roman and not a Greek festival (*H.* 2.4.1–4), whereas the hymn to Mercury refers to the god’s worship in the arched passage in the forum, where the merchants had their stand, so selecting a Roman rather than a Greek scene (*H.* 2.8.45–48).

40 Nichols (1997: 160).

41 “Interim, si non patriae beata | Voce, qua grato licitum cadente | Te canam Phoebos, tibi substrepemus | Syderis ortu” (*H.* 2.8.21–4).

42 *H.* 4.1.18 (“futuri gens temporis”).

“fama” and “decus”. In his hymn to Aether, for instance, he insists that the reputation of his fatherland (“nomina patriae”) exhorted him to write this hymn. He then asks, rhetorically: “For what good is the glory of Greek blood, if people of future generations do not also understand the Greeks when they listen to them and, on the testimony of my poetry, approve of them?”⁴³ According to the poet in one of his epigrams, the Greeks were capable of maintaining their honour, even if they lay prostrate: good deeds (“benefacta”), labours (“labores”), and fame and glory (“fama decusque”) eventually escape “the enemy’s conflagrations”.⁴⁴ However, Marullo did not restrict himself to evoking the accomplishments of the Hellenes. He rather insisted that at least some modern Greeks, notwithstanding the hardships of their current situation, had preserved their ancient virtue. In this, the Spartan myth—to which we will turn next—played a crucial role.

Marullo’s Use of the Spartan Legend

Sparta was central to Marullo’s sense of Greekness. He enthusiastically endorsed the ‘Spartan legend’, or the glorification of Sparta as a political, social, and moral ideal, which was evident from Xenophon and Plutarch and which saw a resurgence in the Renaissance. For Marullo, ancient Sparta was first and foremost a moral, not a socio-political ideal (see also below, p. 219). In his unfinished *Institutiones principales*, he asserted that he admired rugged men like the severe Roman general Manius Curius Dentatus and the Spartans over men of clever speech and subtle learning: “one who prefers the whinnying horses to the cithara, and the rough language of an earlier age to the elegant flow of courtly speech.”⁴⁵ In the same treatise, he advises young princes to have no fear of darkness and to endure “cold Spartan baths without doing any harm to the body”.⁴⁶ The Spartans also serve as a moral example in his epigrams. For instance, Marullo sang the praises of the Spartan king Agesilaus, who had proved to be a valorous general.⁴⁷ In his consolation to Andrea

43 “Nam quo Pelasgi gloria sanguinis, | Si non futuri gens quoque temporis | Agnoscit auditos et ipsa | Voce probat sibi teste Graios?” (*H.* 4.1.17–20). Unlike Fantazzi, I follow the interpretation of Coppini (1995: 131) and take “ipsa voce” as meaning Marullo’s poetic voice (but also compare Chomarat 1995: 203, with the notes on p. 209).

44 *E.* 1.48.29–37. See also *E.* 48.33–34.

45 *P.* 230–42.

46 *P.* 136–42. For the Spartan and Platonic background of the *Institutiones principales*, see Burkard (2008: 211–15).

47 *E.* 3.51. Although Marullo particularly evoked Spartan bravery, he also adduced another specimen of Greek martial courage and prudence in his epigram on the Athenian

Matteo Acquaviva on the death of his father, he evokes—aside from the Athenian Tynichus—a Spartan mother as a model for mourning and alluded to the Spartan women in Plutarch's *Lacaenarum apophthegmata* (241A), which clearly fascinated the poet: some of his epigrams rely on knowledge of the Greek historian's work.⁴⁸

It is peculiar to Marullo's interpretation of the Spartan legend that he saw an intimate connection between Sparta and Byzantium, even though the fall of Constantinople forced him to conclude that, in the city's defence, the Greeks had fatally fallen short of their "native courage" ("patrius animus") and "ancestral virtue" ("virtus avita").⁴⁹ In a curious epigram that he either composed himself or adapted from an unknown Latin source (*E.* 2.30),⁵⁰ he evoked the kind of ancestral courage he had wanted to see in his compatriots when they defended their country against the Ottoman Turks. In this poem, entitled "De fortitudine Byzantiae", Marullo memorialised a Byzantine mother who, after sensing that her son had died in battle, stared motionlessly at his gaping wound and exclaimed:

"Nate", ait "egregium patriae per saecula nomen,
 Quam non degeneri funere, nate, iaces!
 Agnosco quae saepe mihi promittere suetus,
 Oraque adhuc hosti pene tremenda tuo.
 Nunc demum peperisse iuvat: dolor omnis abesto!
 Nunquam ego, te nato, non bene mater ero".⁵¹

general and tyrant-slayer Thrasybulus in *E.* 1.31. Cf. Nepos, *Thr.* 2.6–7. The story is not in Thucydides, Xenophon, and Plutarch.

48 Compare e.g. *E.* 4.5 and Plut. *Mor.* 245C–E.

49 "At certe, patriae quondam dum regna manebant, | Hospitio totus, qua patet orbis, erat. | Tunc, ah, tunc animam pueri exhalare senesque | Debuimus, tantis nec superesse malis; | Tunc patrii meminisse animi et virtutis avitae | Inque necem pulchris vulneribus ruere, | Nec libertatem patrio nisi Marte tueri: | Haec via quaerendae certa salutis erat" [*But certainly, long ago, when the power of our native country was still intact, the whole world showed us hospitality. That was the time when, young and old, we should have breathed our last and not survived to see such great calamities; that was the time to remember the spirit and courage of our ancestors and to rush headlong to our death bearing glorious wounds. The only way to defend liberty was with our own armed forces; that was the one sure way to find salvation*] (*E.* 3.37.23–30).

50 On the curious transmission history of this poem, see Lamers (2015).

51 *E.* 2.30.11–16. Translation of Fantazzi (n. 5), with slight adaptations.

My son, whose outstanding renown will endure through the centuries in our fatherland, in how glorious a death you have fallen, my son! I remember what you used to predict to me, and I recognise the features that are still almost awe-inspiring to your enemies. Now at last I am glad to have given birth; let all sorrow be banished! With you as my son I shall never not be a good mother.

The Byzantine mother featured in this poem has all the features of the Spartan mothers excelling in morbid patriotism whom we find in Plutarch's apophthegms and in the Greek Anthology. In particular, one of the sayings recounted by Plutarch describes a Spartan mother who, burying her son, is approached by another woman. When the latter expresses her sympathy, the Spartan woman voices her sense of joy at her son's death, saying: "I bore him so that he might die for Sparta, and this is the very thing that has come to pass for me."⁵²

A poem such as "De fortitudine Byzantiae" suggests a close relationship between the *mores* of the ancient Spartans and those of the ancient Byzantines, between Sparta and Byzantium, which is important in Marullo's construction of Greekness but has not been sufficiently stressed. Sparta was not an entirely idiosyncratic choice of connection. Plethon had already proposed an ethnic connection between the Peloponnesus and Byzantium via the Dorians, whom he regarded as Peloponnesians (Chapter 1, pp. 40–41). Apart from this, however, there was a Latin tradition (reflected by, among others, Orosius and Isidore of Seville) that erroneously regarded the Spartan king Pausanias as the founder of Byzantium.⁵³ On the basis of this founding myth, it could be argued that Spartan *mores* had been introduced to Byzantium with Pausanias' first colony: similarly, the Sabines had adopted Spartan customs after some Lacedaemonians had settled among them at the time of Lycurgus.⁵⁴ It might very well be that this founding myth is behind the special relationship between Sparta and Byzantium so clearly suggested in "De fortitudine Byzantiae". In any

52 "Θάπτουσά τις τὸν υἱὸν, ὡς γραῖδιον εὐτελὲς προσελθὼν αὐτῇ, 'ὦ γύναι, τὰς τύχας,' εἶπε, 'νὴ τῷ σιῶ ἀλλὰ τὰς καλὰς γ', ἔφη· 'καὶ γὰρ αὐτὸν οὐ ἔνεκεν ἔτεκον, ἵν' ὑπὲρ τὰς Σπάρτας ἀποθάνῃ, τοῦτό μοι συνέβη'" (Plut. *Mor.* 241C8).

53 This idea goes back to the epitome of Pompeius Trogus by Iustinus (9.1.3–4) and was adopted in Isid. *Etym.* 15.1.42, Oros. *Hist.* 3.13.2, and William of Tyre, *Chronicon*, 2.7.36. Historically, Pausanias re-established Byzantium in 479 BC, shortly after Xerxes had destroyed the city during the Greek-Persian war (480 BC). For a critical account of the colonial history of Byzantium, see Isaac (1986: 218–37).

54 Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 2.49.5.

case, the story was apparently known at the time: Marullo's cousin Giovanni Tarcagnota (the author of a voluminous world history in Italian) knew it and for some reason traced it to Eusebius.⁵⁵

Marullo's fascination with Sparta explains why contemporaries called the poet "Spartanus". Although Marullo might have been born in Mistra, his family, unlike Rallo's, generally did not have a demonstrable connection with what was believed to be the ancient site of Sparta.⁵⁶ The "ancestral kingdom" of Marullo's father was Dyme in Achaea, while the Tarchaniotae probably stemmed from Tarchanion in Thrace: both are outside the direct realm of ancient Sparta, although they had been in the Spartan sphere of influence in ancient times.⁵⁷ In any case, Marullo suggested that he and some of his family members (especially on his mother's side) were living representatives of Spartan courage. For him, Spartan virtue lived on, not in Constantinople, but still in the Peloponnesus. Unlike his learned compatriots, who sometimes asked for financial or military support against the Turks in exchange for Greek learning, Marullo rather stressed the need to *undertake* military action rather than *beg* for it.⁵⁸ He regarded himself as an "animus contemptor lucis", always ready to die, alluding to Euryalus' words in Vergil's *Aeneid*.⁵⁹ He also saw the patriotism and military zeal of the ancient Spartans reflected in some of his family members, especially on his mother's side. In his obituary for his maternal grandfather, for example, Marullo recounted his declaration that "when I could not win, I died together with my fatherland", following in the footsteps of warriors like Aristagoras in preferring death over flight, as a real Dorian

55 See Tarcagnota (1580: 115). On Tarcagnota and Marullo, see Tallini (2011).

56 "Nec gemat exilium Spartani Musa Marulli, | Ventura ad nostras ingeniosa dapes: | Verba sed antiqui reddat numerosque Lucreti: | Dum magnis divos laudibus accumulat" [*Let the talented Muse of Spartan Marullo not mourn for her exile as she prepares to arrive at our feast, but let her recite the words and measures of ancient Lucretius, while he heaps the gods with great praises*] (Sannazaro, ed. Putnam 2009: 202, ll. 25–28). Translation by Michael C.J. Putnam.

57 See here McGann (1995: 345).

58 "Hic, ubi Pierio quamvis nutritus in antro, | Mille tuli raram damna habitura fidem. | Iamque nigrescebant prima lanugine malae | Iunctaque erat lustris altera bruma tribus, | Cum fato rapiente vagus Scythiamque per altam | Auferor et gelidi per loca vasta Getae" [*Here, though brought up in the cave of the Pierides, I suffered a thousand deprivations, which one would hardly believe. My cheeks were already growing dark with soft down and I had reached the age of sixteen when in the grip of fate I was carried off to wander through the depths of Scythia and the desolate wastes of frozen Thrace*] (E. 2.32.71–4).

59 E. 3.37.5 (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 9.205). For a discussion of the allusion to Vergil in Marullo's poem, see Enenkel (2008: 379).

does not care as much for his life as for his country.⁶⁰ Marullo's epitaph for his mother (fashioned in the form of a short dialogue, after the example of similar epitaphs in the Greek anthology) recalls the patriotism of the Spartan mothers. Even though she lost her sons and her father in the battle to defend her native country, she lived happily since she deeply loved her fatherland ("pectus habet in patriam").⁶¹

Marullo saw the principal source of resistance against the Ottoman Turks not in the capital city of Byzantium (which had in his view failed in its defence due to an overreliance on foreign forces), but in the Peloponnesus.⁶² In the epitaph "Mortui pro patria", referring to the capture of the Morea by the Ottoman Turks in 1460, he contrasted the bravery of those who died under his grandfather's command for the "Inachian lands" with the cowardice of Thomas Palaeologus, who had left his realm and fatherland ("regnum et patria") instead of dying in its defence. Marullo probably derived the idea for such a collective epitaph from Simonides' famous epitaphs for the Peloponnesians and Spartans slain at Thermopylae, as recorded in the Greek Anthology.⁶³ For him, the real protagonists of Greek resistance against the Ottoman Turks were the Tarchaniotae in the Peloponnesus, not the Palaeologi. In this way, he also repelled the widespread idea that the Greeks (especially those living outside Constantinople) were unworthy of their ancestors and had fallen short of their ancient standards. When, for instance, Cyriac of Ancona visited Mistra in 1447/48, where he was shown around by Gemistos Plethon and the young Laonikos, he was stupefied by the backwardness of the region. He noted in his diaries that the "noble-spirited and renowned race of the Spartans, once the memorable triumph of every kind of military valour, not only in Greece, but in Europe and throughout the whole world, nowadays a people feebly and basely untrue to their breeding, seem to have fallen completely from that famous

60 *E.* 1.27.12 (cf. *Anth. Pal.* 7.231, 431).

61 *E.* 1.52 (cf. *Anth. Pal.* 7.163–65).

62 Marullo lamented over the fall of Constantinople in *E.* 3.37.23–30.

63 "Inachii spes una soli, bis dena, viator, | Milia in hoc tumulo cum patria tegimur, | Dum natosque patresque, larem patriamque tuemur, | Imperioque ducis Tarchanii obsequimur. | Nam rex, indignus patriam qui protegat armis, | Turpiter et regnum fugerat et patriam" [*O passerby, we, the one hope of the land of Inachus, twenty thousand of us, are buried in this tomb with our native land. While we were defending our children and parents, our home and native land, we obeyed the commands of our leader, Tarchaniotes. For our king, who was unworthy to protect his country by arms, shamefully had fled both his kingdom and his native land.*] (*E.* 2.17). The distich of Simonides is *Anth. Pal.* 7.249 (cf. *Hdt.* 7.228 and *Anth. Pal.* 7.248).

pristine moral integrity of the Laconian, Lacedaemonian way of life".⁶⁴ For Marullo, by contrast, the Spartan legend was not a remote ideal from the past, and he regarded himself and some of his family members as living representatives of this ancient tradition.

It has been suggested that Marullo's Spartan poems must be seen as adaptations of stories his parents had told him in the ghetto of Ragusa and that they were, in other words, renderings of a native oral tradition.⁶⁵ On closer inspection, however, it is clear that the poet appropriated ancient themes that also circulated in humanist circles. Apart from Plutarch, the Greek Anthology also was a major source for Spartan material. A particularly illuminating example of how Marullo 'translated' this tradition into Latin is an epigram in which he honoured a Spartan mother for stabbing her son because he had returned from the battlefield alive and without his shield. Returning home alive and without a shield was an outright violation of the famous laconic rule to return from war "ἢ τὸν ἢ ἐπὶ τῷ" ("with it [the shield] or on it!").⁶⁶

Mater Lacaena conspicata filium
 Relicta inermem parmula,
 Progressa contra traicit ferro latus,
 Super necatum his increpans:
 "Abi hinc, morere, non digna me proles, abi,
 Mentite patriam et genus!"⁶⁷

A Spartan mother, after having seen her son unarmed and without his shield, advanced towards him and thrust a sword into his side, uttering over the slain these words: "Away from here, die, child unworthy of me! Away with you, since you deceived your fatherland and your family!"

Rather than an expression of folkloristic praise of Sparta, Marullo's poem about the Spartan mother reflects the learned manner of cultural translation that was much in vogue in humanist circles at the time. His poem, just cited, was a reworking (if not a creative translation) of an epigram from the anthology collected by Planudes in the thirteenth century and first printed by Ianus

64 Cyriac (ed. Bodnar 2003: 330, §56). Translation by Edward W. Bodnar.

65 See Deisser (1996).

66 Plut. *Mor.* 241F16. Plutarch's phrasing was rendered into Latin by Ausonius: "Mater Lacaena clipeo obarmans filium | 'Cum hoc', inquit, 'aut in hoc redi' " (*E.* 23).

67 *E.* 2.6. Translation after Fantazzi (n. 5), with adaptations.

Lascaris in Florence in 1494.⁶⁸ Although the theme of Marullo's poem is frequently repeated in the anthology,⁶⁹ his model is obvious (*A.P.* 9.61):

γυμνὸν ἰδοῦσα Λάκαινα παλίντροπον ἐκ πολέμοιο
παῖδ' ἐὼν ἐς πάτρην ὠκύν ἰέντα πόδα,
ἀντία αἰξάσα δι' ἥπατος ἤλασε λόγχαν
ἄρρενα ῥηξαμένα φθόγγον ἐπὶ κταμένῳ·
“ἀλλότριον Σπάρτας” εἶπεν “γένος, ἔρρε πρὸς Αἰδαν,
ἔρρ’, ἐπεὶ ἐψεύσω πατρίδα καὶ γενέταν”.

A Spartan woman, after having seen her son hastening home in flight from the war and stripped of his armour, rushed to meet him, and, driving a spear through his liver, uttered over the slain these words full of virile spirit: “Away with you to Hades, alien scion of Sparta! Away with you, since you deceived your fatherland and your father!”⁷⁰

Apart from the fact that the structure of Marullo's poem is almost perfectly identical to that of the anonymous epigram taken from the Anthology, the poet translated some Greek phrasings of this poem almost literally into Latin.⁷¹ The endings of the poems are also strikingly similar, while there is a notable variation in the tradition of this theme, precisely on this point.⁷² Rather than

68 In Marullo's time, only the part of the *Greek Anthology* known as the *Anthologia Planudea* (i.e. Maximus Planudes' collection of Greek epigrams) was known. The *Anthologia Palatina* (which together with Planudes' collection forms our *Greek Anthology*) was discovered by the French scholar Claude Saumaise in 1606 in the Palatine Library in Heidelberg (hence its name). I will refer to the modern and most accessible numbering of the *Anthologia Palatina* (*Anth. Pal.*), which includes the poems of the *Anthologia Planudea*. On Lascaris and the Greek Anthology, see Lauxtermann (2009).

69 This particular theme is also found in Eurycius of Cyzicus (*Anth. Pal.* 7.230), Tymnes (7.433), Antipater of Thessaloniki (7.531), Palladas (9.397) and Julian of Egypt (9.447). Note that of these five poems only that of Antipater is absent from Planudes' collection.

70 The translation is after W.R. Paton (Loeb, 1925).

71 Compare “Lacaena conspicata filium”: “ἰδοῦσα Λάκαινα...παῖδ[α]”; “progressa contra”: “ἀντία αἰξάσα”; “super necatum his increpans”: “ῥηξαμένα...ἐπὶ κταμένῳ”; “mentite patriam et genus”: “ἐπεὶ ἐψεύσω πατρίδα καὶ γενέταν”, and the repetition of “abi”: “ἔρρ(ε)” in the final lines of both poems.

72 Compare *Anth. Pal.* 7.230.5–6: “Κατθανε, μηδ' ἐχέτω Σπάρτα ψόγον· οὐ γὰρ ἐκεῖνα | ἤμπλακεν, εἰ δειλοὺς τοῦμόν ἔθρεψε γάλα” (“Die and let Sparta bear no blame; it was no fault of hers if my milk reared cowards”), *Anth. Pal.* 7.433.5–6: “Ἐρρε κακὸν σκυλάκευμα, κακὰ μερίς, ἔρρε ποθ' ἄδαν, | ἔρρε· τὸν οὐ Σπάρτας ἄξιον οὐδ' ἔτεχον” (“Perish, craven whelp, evil piece, to Hell with you! He who is not worthy of Sparta is not my son”), and *Anth. Pal.* 7.531.7–8:

native oral traditions, therefore, Marullo relied on his study of Plutarch and the Greek epigrams for his interpretation of the Spartan legend.

In his appropriation of Sparta, too, Marullo was adopting Latin concerns and interests in order to construct his peculiar Greekness, rather than directly reflecting Byzantine Greek traditions. He was by no means the first or only Latin humanist to re-evoked the Spartan legend and to adapt Greek epigrams in Latin. When Marullo was working on his collection of Latin epigrams, the Spartan myth was increasingly popular, as was the imitation or translation of Greek epigrams from the anthology.⁷³ In a tradition going back to Ausonius, some of Marullo's (near) contemporaries, such as Francesco Filelfo, Ianus Lascaris, Angelo Poliziano, and Pietro Crinito, also reworked Spartan themes from the Greek anthology and Plutarch in order to cast Spartan virtue in Latin verse.⁷⁴ Marullo's rival in life, love, and letters, Poliziano, even took the same Spartan poem from the anthology as the starting point for a composition of his own. Interestingly, Poliziano reworked the Spartan poem from the Greek Anthology in Greek instead of Latin, embellishing it with Homeric idioms.⁷⁵ The fact that

“Λεῖπε τὸν Εὐρώταν, ἴθι Τάρταρον· ἀνίκα δειλὸν | οἷσθα φυγάν, τελέθεις οὔτ’ ἐμὸς οὔτε Λάκων”
 (“Leave the Eurotas, go to Tartarus. Since you could fly like a coward, you are neither mine nor Sparta’s”). In Palladas’ version (*Anth. Pal.* 9.297) four of six lines record the mother’s speech in which she does not so much curse her son as explain and justify her action. Julian of Egypt’s version (*Anth. Pal.* 9.447), on the other hand, constitutes an ethnological explanation for the Spartan mother’s action rather than a vivid depiction of the scene and does not contain direct speech.

73 Both Marullo’s friend Theodore Gazes and his father-in-law Bartolomeo Scala translated or imitated verses from the Greek anthology in Latin as did Ianus Lascaris. See J. Hutton (1935: 36–37, Scala; 96–98, Gazes; 114–21, Lascaris). For some examples of Byzantine scholars who worked on the anthology see J. Hutton (1935: 36, 97, 100–02, 114–21, 107–08). That the epigrams of the anthology were an Italian rather than Byzantine concern is suggested by the fact that all known manuscripts of the *Anthologia Planudea* except one were copied in Italy between 1440 and the end of the fifteenth century. On the history of the Greek anthology in Renaissance Italy and its special appeal to Latin humanists, see in particular Lauxtermann (2009: 49–50, 64–65). On Marullo’s usage of the Greek anthology in some other epigrams, see Jansen (2008).

74 For example, *Anth. Pal.* 7.229 was rendered in Latin by Francesco Filelfo and Pietro Crinito, while Simonides’ famous epitaph (*Anth. Pal.* 7.249) circulated in Latin in Cicero’s translation (*Tusc.* 1.101), Guarino of Verona’s translation of Strabo and Valla’s translation of Herodotus. For references, see J. Hutton (1935: 443–649 *ad loc.*). On some of Marullo’s (near) contemporaries and their particular reworkings of Spartan themes from the anthology, see J. Hutton (1935: 95–96, Filelfo; 124–40, Poliziano; 145–47, Crinito).

75 See Poliziano (ed. Pontani 2002: 170–73, no. 40).

the Latin Poliziano reworked the poem in Greek, while the Greek Marullo adapted it in Latin, suggests that they were doing very different things with the Hellenic tradition. Poliziano's Greek reworking cannot be seen outside the context of his Latin cultural chauvinism (see Chapter 2, p. 81 with Chapter 5, p. 185). In view of his sometimes antagonistic attitude towards the Greeks, Poliziano's emulation of Greek epigrams was an attempt to show that Latins had actually beaten the Greeks in their own language and surpassed them in literary charm. According to the Florentine humanist, his own Greek poems aimed at "reawakening the Greek Muses from their long sleep".⁷⁶ Marullo, by contrast, was not interested in antagonising or emulating Greek poets in Greek. In the *Hymni naturales* he had suggested that his choice of Latin was not entirely voluntary, but had been provoked by his exile (see above, p. 208, with n. 34). As a Greek imitating a Greek epigram in Latin instead of Greek, his poem not only evokes the poet's situation of displacement but also suggests that his Greekness persisted even in Latin.

In a rather eccentric fashion, then, Marullo presented himself as a carrier of Greek values and learning. Both his concern for the "patria sacra" in the hymns and his omnipresent interest in Sparta superficially suggest a link with Gemistos Plethon, who had also written hymns to the pagan gods and glorified Sparta. There is, however, no solid evidence showing that there was a clear historical connection between Plethon and Marullo, let alone that Marullo represented the last branch of a Plethonian sect in Italy. We do not even know if Marullo knew Plethon's work, although this is by no means unthinkable in view of the fact that, in Rome, he probably met Rallo's father, who admired the philosopher of Mistra and saved important manuscripts containing his writings (see also Chapter 1, pp. 44–45). Marullo's hymns are, however, closer to many other sources than to Plethon's hymns. As a mercenary soldier, Marullo was clearly intrigued by the military courage and the physical endurance of the ancient Spartans, but not necessarily also by their societal regimes, and he found the legendary lawgiver Lycurgus (central to the political myth of Sparta) "badly excessive".⁷⁷ As far as I can see, Marullo did not envisage a Spartan society as an ideal polity and, as far as his poems show, he was more sympathetic towards republican city-states such as Ragusa. The similarities with Plethon's work therefore seem historically unspecific and rather superficial. If anything, Marullo's Spartan poems and his hymns reflect the poet's involvement in the contemporary literary culture of Italian humanism rather than his adherence to

76 Cited from Poliziano (ed. Pontani 2002: vi).

77 "male nimius" (*P.* 32–33).

Plethon's philosophical doctrine or to an oral tradition he had heard during his youth in Ragusa. Before discussing the contrasting vision of Greekness voiced by Manilio Rallo in his poetry, the next section first explores Marullo's sense of connection with Rome, which complemented the poet's Greek persona.

Greco-Romanism Revived?

Although Marullo generally insisted upon his Greekness, he also stressed his connection with the Roman tradition. In his poems, he constructed his Roman connection primarily as a personal and genealogical one. In an epigram concerning the death of his brother, he evoked their "Greek ancestors and Latin forefathers".⁷⁸ In another epigram to Neaera (his fictitious Latin beloved), in which he insisted upon his nobility, Marullo specified that "it is something to have the Marulli as ancestors whom Mars' Rome so often put forward as leaders".⁷⁹ The specific Roman link Marullo had in mind when he wrote these lines may be inferred from Marullo's father Manilio's epitaph, which was in the S. Domenico in Ancona until the 1760s. In the prose epitaph, the Marulli traced their lineage back to the Roman Gordiani, most likely on the basis of the *Historia Augusta*, first printed in 1475, which identifies Maecius Marullus as the father of Gordian I.⁸⁰ As the Greek name *Maroullis* or *Maroullas* seems to have been derived from a Greek word rather than a Latin cognomen,⁸¹ this connection was probably invented in order to forge a noble Roman background for the Byzantine Marulli. Although we can only conjecture about the erudite discoverer of the 'Gordianian link', it is possible that Marullo was responsible for it.⁸² While the Latins were generally reluctant to accept Byzantine claims to the Roman heritage, they did sometimes accept the genealogical claims of individual Byzantines to Roman ancestors. In his epitaph for Manuel Chrysoloras, for example, Pier Paolo Vergerio asserted that he stemmed "ex vetusto genere Romanorum" (see Chapter 2, pp. 70–71).

78 "Occurrunt Graiique atavi proavique Latini" (*E.* 1.22.21).

79 "Et tamen est aliquid proavos habuisse Marullos, | Quos totiens tulerit Martia Roma duces" (*E.* 2.32.135–36).

80 Gord. 2.2. On the epitaph, see McGann (1981, 1980). Although Marullo remains unmentioned in the Anconitan epitaph, he composed an epitaph of his own (*E.* 2.36).

81 Laurent (1931: 482, with n. 2).

82 Forging ancient Roman genealogies to claim nobility was common in the Byzantine diaspora (see Harris 2013).

Like Theodore Gazes and others, Marullo looked at the Byzantine Empire as an empire of Greeks who had for some time possessed the *imperium Romanum*. This appears most clearly at the end of his “De exilio suo”, already quoted above, where the poet represented the fall of Byzantium in terms of a transfer of the “*Romanum imperium*” from “Achaean” or Greeks to Turks.⁸³ As long as the Greeks held the *imperium*, their empire was Roman, but they themselves were Hellenes. At first glance, Marullo’s hymn to Mars might seem to capture this idea. In the hymn, Marullo addresses the “ancient offspring of Codrus”, the Athenian king who sacrificed himself to save the Athenians. This puzzling formulation has generally been interpreted as referring to the Greeks living under Ottoman rule.⁸⁴ If we construe the hymn’s addressee this way, Marullo warns his compatriots as follows:

Antiqua Codri progenies, licet
 Hinc arva bubus mille teras tuis,
 Hinc dite seponas in arca
 Quicquid Arabs vehit aestuosus,
 Frustra clientum dinumeres greges
 Et consulari praemia purpurae,
 Frustra renidentes curules
 Et veterum decora alta patrum,
 Ni cuncta prudens dis referas bonis . . .⁸⁵

O ancient offspring of Codrus, though you plough your fields with a thousand oxen and store up in rich coffers all the goods an Arab transports from torrid lands, in vain would you count the crowds of clients and the rewards for your consular purple, in vain the resplendent curule chairs and the lofty dignities of the ancient fathers, if you would not wisely attribute all of this to the good gods . . .

83 E. 3.37.41–44.

84 “antiqua Codri progenies” (*H.* 2.6.1). For this interpretation of the phrase, see Coppini (1995: 215) and Chomarat (1995: 122). Although the word *progenies* is usually used for individuals (cf. Hor. *Carm.* 3.29.1: “Tyrrhena regum progenies”, referring to Maecenas), Marullo also used it to refer to the “divae” in *H.* 2.1.1 and the “beatae stellae” in *H.* 2.3.39. McGann (1995) discusses *H.* 2.6 at length in the context of Marullo’s appropriation of Horace and also notes the distinctive Byzantine “Ρωμαισσύνη” in the poem.

85 *H.* 2.6.1–9. Translation after Fantazzi (n. 5), with slight adaptations.

The *termini technici* that Marullo used here (“clientes”: clients, “consularis purpura”: consular purple, and “curules”: curule magistracies) evoke the world of Roman politics, not that of ancient Greece.⁸⁶ It would seem, therefore, that Marullo here depicts the Byzantines as Greeks under a Roman regime. This is in line with the way in which Giovanni Gemisto would later present Greece in his *Protrepticon et pronosticon* for Pope Leo X: he imagined Greece as a territory of Greeks who had held an “imperium sine fine”, which clearly evokes the Roman Empire (see Chapter 7, pp. 267–68). Despite the consensus in the scholarship, however, it is unlikely that Marullo really had the Greeks under Ottoman rule in mind when he addressed the “ancient offspring of Codrus” here. How are the Greeks (otherwise depressed by the slaughter and the grim warfare of the Ottoman Turks, as stated in ll. 25–28) supposed to be “ploughing [their] fields with a thousand oxen and storing up all the goods an Arab transports from torrid lands”? How are we to explain the contrary-to-fact implication of the subjunctive imperfect “dinumeres” (“would count”) if the Greeks had actually lost their self-government? If the “antiqua Codri progenies” should not be identified with the Greeks, Marullo’s addressee remains to be identified, though he might be Zanobi Acciaiuoli, as Nikolaus Thurn suggested,⁸⁷ or, less likely, the pope.⁸⁸

In the same hymn to Mars, Marullo also comes close to identifying the Byzantines collectively with the Romans. The poet exhorts Clio to sing the praise of “pater Gradivus” (sc. Mars) “with the usual praise of our ancestors”, which probably alludes to the dancing and hymn-singing priests installed by Numa (Liv. 1.20.4) in order to celebrate Mars. Moreover, Marullo complains that

86 See here Chomarat (1995: 122) and McGann (1995: 340).

87 Thurn (1998: 22–23) criticised the idea that “antiqua Codri progenies” referred to the Greeks. He argued that the references to consular purple and curule magistracies only make sense if the addressee is not a Greek (which is not conclusive, as we now know). He suggested that the addressee was Zanobi Acciaiuoli (cf. *E.* 1.54.2 and *E.* 3.20*bis*.1), whose family ruled the Duchy of Athens until it fell to the Turks in 1456. Although this is very well possible, there are some objections to the idea that Marullo would call Zanobi “antiqua Codri progenies”. First, Zanobi was born in Florence after the Ottoman armies had conquered Athens and never ruled the Greek city himself. Secondly, it remains unclear why Marullo would call Zanobi the *ancient* (“antiqua”) offspring of Codrus: the Acciaiuoli family ruled Athens for roughly one century from 1388 onwards and had no link with Athens going back to antiquity. Thirdly, a positive evaluation of foreign rule in Greece conflicts with Marullo’s critical attitude towards foreign intrusions into Greek affairs elsewhere (see e.g. *E.* 2.27).

88 In Boccaccio’s *bucolica* (14.91–111), Codrus stood for Jesus (cf. McGann 1995: 340). With this in mind, the “antiqua Codri progenies” could be a highly unusual alternative to the more usual formula *proles, pars, or progenies Iovis* to address the pope.

Mars seems to “take delight in the deplorable slaughter of his own kind” (“suorum miserae clades”) and refers to the Byzantine Greeks as Mars’ “descendants” (“nepotes”).⁸⁹ At first glance, this seems to be an obviously Roman connection: Mars’ son Romulus founded Rome, the god of war was thus the primogenitor of the Romans, and these ‘sons of Mars’, or *Martigenae*, constructed New Rome or Constantinople on the site of Greek Byzantion under Constantine the Great.⁹⁰ If we realise, however, that Marullo’s hymns are about Greek gods, we know that Mars can be regarded as the Latin equivalent of Ares. This thwarts the one-sidedly Roman connection in these lines. Ares is sometimes regarded as the progenitor of the so-called *Spartoi* (Σπαρτοί), who sprang, fully armoured, from the teeth of the god’s dragon. Stephanus of Byzantium in particular recalls that these *Spartoi* had given their name to Sparta after their arrival in Laconia.⁹¹ If we follow this genealogy, Mars-Ares’ “descendants” turn into Spartans who, according to a Latin tradition that Marullo apparently followed, had also founded Byzantion under Pausanias (see p. 213 above). In this way, Mars-Ares can be regarded as the mythic ancestor of both the Spartan and the Roman colonisers of Byzantium-Constantinople. As a self-declared Greek and perceived Spartan, writing in the language of ancient Rome, Marullo can thus be regarded as embodying this Greco-Roman heritage of Constantinople. In this sense, then, he was also a *Constantinopolitanus* in the full sense of the word.

Although the hymn to Mars might subtly suggest, to some readers, the Greco-Roman past of the Byzantine capital, Marullo did not explicitly call his compatriots collectively “Romellenes”. His own self-proclaimed Roman background was confined to a specific connection of familial kinship with the Marulli clan (see above, p. 220): he did not use the Roman link to identify with fellow Ῥωμαῖοι in the Greek East, but rather as a means to acquire personal social distinction in his host society. Regarding the self-declared Romans of the East primarily as Greeks, he also stressed the age-old interaction between Greeks and Latins as a model for contemporary Italo-Greek relations.⁹² Like Ianus Lascaris in his

89 *H.* 2.6.25–26, 32.

90 The Romans were sometimes called “Martigenae” (cf. Sil. *Pun.* 12.582, 16.532). Elsewhere, Marullo called Rome “Martia Roma” (*E.* 2.32.136), with a formulation of Ovid (*Tr.* 3.7.52, *Pont.* 1.8.24, 4.9.65) and Martial (5.19.5).

91 “Λακωνικὸν χωρίον, ἀπὸ τῶν μετὰ Κάδμου Σπαρτῶν, περὶ ὧν Τιμαγόρας φησὶν ἐκπεσόντας δὲ αὐτοὺς εἰς τὴν Λακωνικὴν Σπάρτην ἀφ’ ἑαυτῶν ὀνομάσαι” (Steph. Byz. s.v. “Σπάρτη”). He also adds that there was a Spartan village close to the Black Sea, but does not mention its name. Cf. Malkin (1994: 102–03).

92 Nichols (1997: 158). According to Chomarat (1995: 122), Marullo did not properly distinguish between the Greek and Roman spheres.

Florentine Oration, discussed in the previous chapter, Marullo recognised that the Italian peninsula had been thoroughly Greek in the past. Trying to induce his imagined Neaera into a marriage, Marullo stressed the intimate historical relationships between Greeks and Latins. “How about the fact that”, he asked Neaera, “—if you retrace the history of your oldest ancestors—, the very region where you were born once was Inachian (sc. Greek)?”⁹³ Just as Lascaris did, Marullo also claimed Greek roots for the Etruscans and the Sabines, who were among the earliest inhabitants of the Italian peninsula.⁹⁴ In the same passage, he evoked *magna Graecia* and recalled that even “the head of the world, the most beautiful city of Rome, is proud that it has been founded by Greeks” (“Graiis condita gaudet avis”).⁹⁵ In this way, Marullo Hellenised the Italian peninsula just as Ianus Lascaris had done in his *Florentine Oration* (which Marullo perhaps even attended), thus transforming the place of his exile into a more familiar, more Greek place. Although we should perhaps not assign too much importance to Marullo’s frequent usage of the word, it is notable that use of the term *Pelasgi* to refer to the Byzantine Greeks particularly highlights the close Italo-Grecian contacts to which the poet alluded in his poem to Neaera. As the Pelasgians were regarded as the first colonisers of the Italian peninsula,⁹⁶ they are emblematic of the age-old relationship between Greeks and Latins that Marullo emphasised here. Even though he did point to the ancient interactions between Greeks and Latins, Marullo always stressed the priority and superiority of the ancient Greeks: he admitted that the fortifications of Constantinople were Roman, but at the same time argued that ancient Greece had taught mankind to optimise urban defence in the first place.⁹⁷ There is no doubt that, just like most (if not all) of his fellow Byzantine Greeks in the Latin West, he found Greek civilization superior to Roman culture.

While Marullo used his maternal family of the Tarchaniotae to highlight the values he admired in the Spartans, he used his paternal Marulli lineage to forge a distinctively Roman connection. Although he also alluded to the Romanness of Constantinople, he adopted the Western viewpoint with regard

93 “Quid, quod priscorum repetas si facta parentum, | Haec quoque, qua nata est, Inachis ora fuit?” (*E.* 2.32.117–8). The translation “if you revisit the histories” for “repetas si facta” is informed by the two variant readings recorded in Perosa’s critical apparatus, i.e. “Perlege gestiloquos veracia scripta libellos” in the 1489-edition and “Quod si priscorum repetas tamen acta parentum” in BR, Cod. Riccard. 971.

94 On Plethon’s view on the Greek origin of the Sabines and its sources, see Chapter 1, pp. 40–41. On Lascaris’ view on the Greek roots of the Etruscans and its sources, see Chapter 5, pp. 174–75.

95 *E.* 2.32.117–22.

96 See, e.g., Serv. *Aen.* 8.600–02.

97 *E.* 1.48.31–32, 2.32.111.

to the Byzantines collectively and regarded them primarily as Greeks, like most of his fellow Greeks in the diaspora.

Manilio Cabacio Rallo's Denial of Greekness

Even though Marullo throughout his poetry stressed the absence of Greece and the Greek language, he used his Latin poetry to at least evoke the Greek traditions from which he derived his pride as a Greek. In the poetry of Manilio Cabacio Rallo, however, the very use of Latin rather than Greek signals rupture and loss instead of serving to construct a notion of renewed Greekness.⁹⁸ Although he recognised himself as a Greek by birth and expressed a strong sense of attachment to his birthplace, he insisted upon his linguistic and cultural alienation from Greece. Unlike Marullo's emphasis on the survival or even renewal of Greekness in Latin, Rallo's self-destructive rhetoric stresses the more disruptive effects of exile. Although it has been argued that Rallo's exile poems reflect Stoicism, the principal Stoic precepts regarding overcoming exile are actually violated in his poetry.⁹⁹ For example, the poet's persona does not make an effort to put his situation into perspective, and his *virtus* (invincible in Stoic thought) has fallen together with his fatherland. Rallo's persona is eventually incapable of overcoming the hardships of displacement and his grief over the fall of Greece.

Adopting the Ovidian pose of poetic decline (see above, p. 206), Rallo stressed that the destruction of Greece and his displacement from his native country had entirely devastated his poetical abilities. More than once his voice must be stirred out of silence, either by Giovanni Pontano (*E.* 2), by Mnemosyne (*E.* 3), by Apollo (*E.* 17), or by Felice della Rovere (*E.* 31). In his hymnic poem to Felice della Rovere, composed in glyconic and pherecratean stanzas, Cabacio Rallo urged his addressee to help him, as if she were a goddess:

Quare, age, ob patriae mala
 Curasque exilii graves
 Torpens ingenium incitans,
 Perge, quaeso, mihi dare
 Linguasque oraue centum.¹⁰⁰

98 In an epigram to Ianus Lascaris, Rallo explained that his Muse, born in Greece ("in patria Atthide"), sang in Latin only not to vanish entirely (Rallo, ed. Lamers 2013: 195, no. 32, 15–21).

99 Nichols (1993) in particular emphasised the allegedly Stoic aspects of Rallo's exilic poetry.

100 Rallo (ed. Lamers 2013: 194, no. 31, ll. 31–35).

Therefore, come on, incite my talent, torpid due to the misfortunes of my fatherland and the grave sorrows of my exile, come on, I beg you, give me a hundred tongues and mouths.

Although his collection of poems shows that Rallo's poetic voice was not entirely silenced, the poet was, he insisted, unable to write 'high' or philosophical poetry. This sharply contrasts with Marullo's ambitious project to evoke the "sacra patria" of his native country in his hymns. By contrast, Rallo's sense of displacement disabled him to compose this kind of poetry. In an elegiac letter to Gioviano Pontano, Rallo explicitly explained his inability to write 'high' poetry as a result of the fall of Greece and his forced displacement from his "patria":

Vmbra ego sum similisque mei, si quaeris, imago
 Extructis superest sola relictæ rogis.
 Nec mihi laudis amor mansuræ aut gloria famæ,
 Omnia cum sensu quæ periere meo.
 Nec placet ingenium vigilatæque munera mentis,
 Omnia cum patria quæ cecidere mea,
 Cum prima cecidere mea quam Phoebus et omnis
 Pieridum fertur solam adamasse chorus,
 Solam posthabitis terra celebrasse marique
 Et solam culto plus coluisse polo.¹⁰¹

I am a shadow and, if you look for me, only an image of my former self lies abandoned at the high-raised pyre. Neither love for lasting recognition nor the glory of fame please me: they all vanished together with my feelings. My talents nor my nightly intellectual pursuits please me: they all fell with my country. They all fell with my eminent fatherland: the only country, they say, Phoebus and the entire chorus of the Muses adored, the only country they honoured, neglecting all other places on earth or at sea, and the only country they loved even more than the revered heavens.

Apart from his literary "ingenium" (*E.* 2.1–16), Rallo's Spartan character, too, vanished. His forced displacement not only affected his ability to write poetry, but it also corroded his ability to speak, think, and act like a veritable Spartan, or Greek. Rallo evoked the corrosive effect of his displacement in his poem about exile ("De exilio") as well. There, the poet claims that, due to his exile,

101 Rallo (ed. Lamers 2013: 173, no. 1, ll. 7–16).

he is deprived of his ancestral courage (“*patrius animus*”) and his Spartan virtue (“*Spartana virtus*”) and has to adapt to the “*rudes mores*” of his imaginary companions in exile:

Hinc patrii cedere animi Spartanaque virtus
 Fracta iacet, laus hinc, hinc mihi sordet honos.
 Hinc etiam duro studium est placuisse tyranno,
 Servorum hinc vario iungor et ipse gregi,
 Nam quos Euphratesque tulit, quos misit Orontes,
 Hos comites vitae cogor habere meae.
 Conferimur conorque rudes effingere mores,
 Sat bene nec solitus comprimit ora pudor
 Iamque malo spreuit natura imbuta decorum,
 Iam studia in mores longa abiere novos.¹⁰²

Here my ancestral courage lies and here my Spartan virtue lies down broken. Here my fame, my honour deteriorate. Here I labour to please even a harsh tyrant, here I, too, am joined with a diverse band of slaves as I am forced to spend my life in the company of men whom the Euphrates brought hither and the Orontes sent. We are joined, I am forced to adapt to crude customs with fair effect, and an unwonted shame silences me. Nature, imbued with evil, already scorned propriety, assiduous study already dissolves into new customs.

In this way, exile and the fall of Greece undermined Rallo's sense of selfhood.¹⁰³ Significantly, his own disintegration parallels the decline of Greece herself under Ottoman domination. Just like the poet himself, “*Graecia*”, too, has lost her distinctive character, so that she has become unrecognisable, becoming both the poet's “*patria*” and a “*hostica tellus*”. The poet's address to his native country is worth quoting in full:

102 Rallo (ed. Lamers 2013: 171–72, no. 1, ll. 49–58). In l. 56, the negative conjunction “*nec*” is ambiguous as the negative may apply either to the principal verb (“*comprimit*”) or to another word in the coordinate clause (“*solitus*”). In this case, I decided the matter in favour of the latter option. It is in line with the poetic inertia which Rallo voices elsewhere and which is caused by the poet's exile and loss of his fatherland. For similar constructions with “*nec solitus*” in poetry see Prop. 2.3.6 and Stat. *Theb.* 8.31. Line 53 refers to Prop. 2.23.21–22.

103 In the dedicatory letter to Giulio de' Medici (available in Lamers 2013a: 168–70), Rallo referred to himself with “*reliquiae meae*” (ll. 35–36). Cf. his poetic letter to Pontano (Rallo, ed. Lamers 2013: 173, no. 2, ll. 7–8).

Flere tuos ergo incipiam, mea Graecia, casus,
 Nempe reformidat linguaque corque mihi.
 Arguar invisae sed ne cessisse ruinae,
 Hoc tibi de maesto pectore carmen habe,
 Quod referat cunctis obliviscentibus aevo
 Quantus erat noster te pereunte dolor.
 Heu patria, heu quondam divum domus alta tropaeis,
 Persidis atque animis altior ipsa tuis,
 Quam gelidus Strymon, lato quam gurgite Ganges
 Vosque papyriferae pertimuistis aquae,
 Occiduaeque domus sensisti et inhospita Syrtis¹⁰⁴
 Vtraque ferventi scissaque terra freto.
 Quae te, inquam, patria, o divum sors invida fati,
 Eripuit, faciem supposuitque suam,
 Ex miti finxitque feram? non verba nec ora
 Certa refers habitu dissimulanda novo,
 Ipsa sinu quaerenda tuo nec nosceris ulli.
 O, ubi nunc mores et nitor ille vetus?
 Nam veluti obducta fuscantur sidera nube
 Perque hiemes turpis non bene ridet ager
 Depositaque coma sordescit in arbore ramus
 Pictaque non ullo flore renidet humus,
 Sic atrata manes postquam data barbara iura
 Sumis et est nusquam qui fuit ante color
 Iamque eadem patria es nobis atque hostica tellus.
 Ignosce, heu, fasso da veniamque precor.

Let me begin lamenting your vicissitudes, my dear Greece: my tongue and heart naturally fear this enterprise tremendously. But in order that I will not be said to have yielded to your hateful ruin, please accept, from a heart full of sorrow, this poem. This song will recount to all who are forgetful for all eternity how deep our grief over your destruction was. Oh fatherland, oh former house of gods, eminent for its victories, superior in courage even to the Persian Empire, you, whom the icy Strymon, the wide stream of the Ganges and you, papyrus-bearing waters, all feared, and whom you, inhospitable Syrtis, experienced in the West, just as did

104 The formulation “inhospita Syrtis” derives from Verg. *Aen.* 4.41 and 8.120 as well as Luc. 1.367. The formulation “occidua domus” to refer to the West goes back to Stat. *Silv.* 1.4.73 and *Theb.* 1.200.

the two regions that are separated by a raging strait.¹⁰⁵ Whatever envious fate has snatched you, fatherland, away, put its presence in place of yours, and turned you from a gentle appearance into a wild beast? You speak out your words uncertainly and must disguise yourself in a new dress. And while you are looking for yourself deep inside, you are unrecognisable to your own son. Oh, where have your customs and ancient splendour gone? Just as stars, overcast by a cloud, fade from sight, and in the rainy season unseemly fields lay barren, just as the branches of a tree look pallid when they have lost their leaves, and the land is not a riot of coloured flowers, so you remain dressed in dark mourning now that you assume the barbarian laws, which have been issued, and your colourful appearance of old has gone. For me you are the same fatherland as before, but at the same time you are a hostile land. Oh, forgive me, please, and be favourable to a wearied soul!¹⁰⁶

The way Rallo evokes the decline of Greece in these lines recalls the way he presented the decline of his own persona in “De exilio”. Just as the poet’s “longa studia” were supplanted by “mores novi” (l. 58) and “rudes mores” (l. 55), gentle (“mitis”) Greece has been transformed into a savage (“fera”) (l. 41). Rallo’s “new customs” are mirrored in the “new dress” (“habitus novus”) of Greece, whose lost ancient customs and splendour (“mores et nitor ille vetus”) (l. 44) correspond to Rallo’s fractured “laus” and “honos” (l. 50). Moreover, both Rallo and his fatherland deteriorate due to the detrimental impact of barbarians: while Greece is said to be subject to “barbara iura” (l. 49), Rallo says he is forced to live with a band of Oriental slaves (ll. 51–53).

Both Rallo’s persona and the way he presents his fatherland crucially differ from the way in which Marullo presented himself and Greece. In particular, the rhetoric of loss and corrosion pervading Rallo’s poetry stands in sharp contrast to Marullo’s persona. Even though Rallo’s comrade lamented the decline of “patrius animus” and “avita virtus”, he also emphasised the survival of Greek virtue and learning, even in Latin. For Marullo, Latin poetry was a means to overcome the cultural loss caused by his exile and the destruction of Greece. Rallo’s persona, by contrast, did not represent the survival but the *loss* of the Greek legacy. In his poetry, therefore, the use of Latin instead of Greek becomes an ultimate sign of the alienation from Greek culture the poet

105 In Ovid *Met.* 3.151, the words “utraque terra” refer to East and West but here they probably refer to Africa and Europe, separated by the Strait of Gibraltar (Rallo’s “fervens fretum”).

106 Rallo (ed. Lamers 2013: 173–74, no. 2, ll. 27–52).

evokes.¹⁰⁷ In this way, Rallo's persona can be regarded as the exact opposite of what Bessarion and his generation had envisioned. As we have seen, the cardinal had hoped that his library would help future Hellenes avoid becoming a "voiceless" people, similar to "barbarians" and "slaves" (see Chapter 2, p. 84 with n. 82 and Chapter 3, pp. 111–12). By fashioning his poetic persona in terms of barbarisation, enslavement, and poetic aphasia, Cabacio Rallo by contrast indirectly played havoc with Bessarion's hopes: his use of Latin instead of Greek only reinforces this sense of rupture and loss. While many Greeks feared intellectual and cultural degeneration and occasionally called themselves and their fellow Greeks "remnants of the Hellenes", they eventually almost always presented themselves as the bearers of Hellenism if not the descendants of the ancient Greeks. The previous chapter, for example, showed that Ianus Lascaris regarded himself and his fellow Greeks as heirs of the ancient Hellenes, even if they were "in the full sense pathetic remnants" of them, as well as how he attempted to capitalise on this connection of kinship (Chapter 2, pp. 78–79; Chapter 3, pp. 120–23; Chapter 5, pp. 175–76). In many ways, he is exemplary of how the Byzantine intelligentsia in Italy looked at themselves. If Marullo was eccentric in the ways he created a distinctive sense of Greekness, Rallo did something unheard of by denying his Greekness.¹⁰⁸

By Way of Epilogue: Rallo's Denial in Context

One might wonder why Rallo chose to present himself in this way. Why did he refuse to adopt a Greek persona? His persona sits uneasily with the idea that, for the Byzantine intelligentsia in Italy, Greekness entailed advantages in the form of cultural prestige and social distinction. Around the time Rallo collected and published his poems, his life orbited around Pope Leo x, and as far as the status of Greek and Greeks is concerned, this entourage was not unlike Marullo's Florentine milieu. Pope Leo x was a notorious Philhellene: he not only favoured the idea of a crusade against the Ottoman Turks (see Chapter 7, pp. 235–38) but also exerted his energies to promote Greek studies. Apart from favouring the Greek community in Venice,¹⁰⁹ he had several Greeks in

107 See here Rallo (ed. Lamers 2013: 195, no. 32, ll. 15–21).

108 The notion of a dying Greece is not wholly absent from Marullo's poetry. In *E.* 2.49.5, for example, Marullo calls his fatherland a "pitiful corpse" ("cadaver flebile"). However, this notion never overtakes the poet's insistence on survival and preservation.

109 See here Fedalto (1967: 44–53).

his entourage and saw it as his papal duty to support them where he could.¹¹⁰ Cabacio Rallo himself served as the pope's *acolythus capellae* and *cubicularius* (at least in 1513) and as a *familiaris* enjoyed privileged access to ecclesiastical benefices.¹¹¹ In the same year in which Rallo served as *cubicularius*, Leo X established a Greek Academy at the Quirinal in Rome that was specifically designed to educate young students from the Greek-speaking world and to publish its own Greek books.¹¹² In order to bring this to pass, the pope invoked the support of Ianus Lascaris (who directed the college), Markos Mousouros (who taught Greek there), and Zacharias Kalliergis (who worked at the college press).¹¹³ If we place Rallo's denial of Greekness in the context of this project, and the vision of Greek culture it implied, his persona gains a particular significance.

Rallo referred to the Greek Academy at the Quirinal in his long crusade poem to Leo X, which was the central and most substantial poem of the collection he printed in 1520. The poet not only insisted upon the need to liberate Greece from the Ottoman Turks but also praised the pope for urging "the noble offspring of Pelasgian blood, collected from everywhere, to abound in studies that they inherited from their ancestors." According to Rallo, the pope restored Greek culture after war had ravaged it.¹¹⁴ When, in February 1514, the first twelve Greek boys had arrived in Rome to be educated at the papal school, some of them had addressed the pope in a similar fashion during the welcome ceremony, carefully orchestrated by Ianus Lascaris. A certain Konstantinos Rallis (perhaps a family member of our poet) addressed the pope as "the saviour of illustrious Greece" ("σῶτηρ κλεινῆς Ἑλλάδος"), and Nikolaos Loukanis

110 See here the pope's remark about the relationship between the Greeks and the popes: "Consuevere Romani Pontifices predecessores nostri pro debito pastoralis officii Graecos, praesertim nobiles, qui a perfidissimis Turchis, Christiani nominis hostibus, bonis eorum, domibus, possessionibus et praediis spoliati et exules facti fuerunt, apostolicis favoribus et gratiis prosequi" (cited from Dorez 1885: 326).

111 On Rallo's positions at the papal courts of Julius II and Leo X as well as his ecclesiastical benefices, see Lamers (2013a: 138–40).

112 It seems likely that the college had ecclesiastical and political purposes besides purely scholarly ones, just as the later Greek College of St. Athanasios founded by Pope Gregory XIII in 1577 was also an instrument to strengthen the ties that bound Greeks and Latins. On the generally understudied academy on the Quirinal see, in ascending chronological order, esp. Fanelli (1961), Manoussakas (1963), Barberi and Cerulli (1972), Hobson (1976), Tsirpanlis (1980, 1983), Saladin (2000a: 101–22) with A. Pontani (2002), Saladin (2000b), and Pagliaroli (2004).

113 Saladin (2000a: 119).

114 Rallo (ed. Lamers 2013: 176, no. 4, ll. 1–10).

even dramatically suggested that Greece had personally sent him to the pope, whom he hailed as the protector of Greek liberty (“Λέοντα, θεοῦ εἰκόν’, ἐῆς ἐλευθερίας πρόμον, ἐκ θεσφάτων Ἑλλάς πέμπει με προσειπεῖν”).¹¹⁵ In this way, Leo x virtually took over the role Bessarion had previously played: to protect the Greeks and their heritage, not only in Italy but also in Greece.

Rather than playing on humanist concerns, as did Konstantinos Rallis and Nikolaos Loukanis, Rallo’s persona alludes to the fear behind attempts to promote the Greek heritage, namely the fear of losing it. In a letter to Markos Mousouros, drafted by Pietro Bembo, Pope Leo x had himself declared: “with all my heart I desire to restore the language of the Greeks and Greek studies which are, today, in a state of decline and near obliteration.”¹¹⁶ By the time Rallo published his *Iuveniles ingenii lusus*, the Greek academy of the Quirinal was already declining: Lascaris had departed for France in 1518, Mousouros had died in July 1517, and Kalliergis had been involved in the college press only until 1517/19. We do not know much about the academy’s fortunes but it would seem that, by 1520, much of its initial success had for some reason been halted. Against this background, Rallo’s persona reads as a gloomy warning for the near future. By presenting himself as a failed Greek in the heart of European Hellenism, Rallo subtly criticised the politics of cultural conservation and regeneration that had inspired the Greek Academy of Leo x and Bessarion’s endeavours to safeguard the Greek heritage. Without a free Greece, Rallo suggests, original Hellenism has no chance to survive in the end. If Marullo’s persona showed his Latin audience that the Greeks *deserved* Western aid,¹¹⁷ Rallo’s persona showed that they urgently *needed* it. Without it, his work suggests, there will be no Greeks anymore. Without Greece, the Greeks vanish.

But what was this place called ‘Greece’? Although both Michele Marullo and Manilio Rallo, like so many other Greeks, felt committed to “Graecia” and desired to see it restored, they were ultimately vague about how they imagined this country as a geographical or territorial reality. Marullo evoked Greek landscapes in his hymns, but did not articulate a clear image of the country he wanted to see repaired through a crusade. Nor did Rallo. Analysing a poem dedicated to Pope Leo x by Giovanni Gemisto, the next chapter not only explores how the poet created an image of Greece through Latin poetry but also explores the problem of Greece as a territorial notion in more detail.

115 Saladin (2000a: 109–111).

116 The letter was written published by Pietro Bembo (see Saladin 2000a: 10, with n. 15).

117 Haskell (1998: 112).

The Territorialisation of Hellenism: Giovanni Gemisto's Vision of the Greek World

Byzantine intellectuals tried to galvanise Western powers against the Ottoman Turks in order to liberate and regain their fatherland, which they called Greece. Even if their attachment to Greece is pivotal to their sense of Greekness, what this fatherland represented, and where it was located, was, paradoxically, anything but clear-cut. Their silence has been explained as a rhetorical strategy. As the eventual partition of Ottoman territories in the East would be a bone of contention, they wisely preferred not to anticipate such a partition as occurring in a way favourable to the Greeks.¹ The general vagueness about the contours of their fatherland also resulted from genuine uncertainty as to the exact territory they wanted to restore. Did they want to return to the Byzantine empire as they, or their parents, had left it? Or did they want to establish a new kind of Greek kingdom? And how could they legitimise their claims to a specific territory when all these lands were in the hands of different powers—and often had been so from the Fourth Crusade onwards?

An answer came in the winter of 1516, when the Anconitan presses of Bernardino Guerralda issued a curious Latin poem of more than two thousand dactylic hexameters, entitled *Protrepticon et pronosticon* and composed by the otherwise unknown Giovanni Gemisto, who probably fled from Epidauros to Italy in the 1460s.² It has been suggested that he was the grandson of Gemistos Plethon, whose sons, Demetrios and Andronikos, held estates not too far from Epidauros.³ In Italy, Gemisto became a member of the humanist

1 Binner (1980: 232–33).

2 Gemisto's biography is obscure (see Lamers 2012b: 68, n. 16). He refers to "Epidauros" as his birth-place. In early modern Latin, this name may refer to Epidauros in Argolis, Monemvasia (near the ancient site of Epidauros Limera), or Ragusa (modern Dubrovnik). From the fact that the poet calls his birth-place a "tamer of horses" (Gemisto 1516: fol. Eii^v, l. 11), alluding, in Vergilian fashion (*G.* 3.42), to the horse-races in honour of Asclepius at Epidauros, it can be inferred that he was born in Epidauros. Additionally, he calls Asclepius' sons Podalirius and Machaon his "kinsmen" from Epidauros (fol. Ci^v, ll. 29–30). See also Appendix 2 on p. 295 (no. 18).

3 This has been suggested by Sathas (1863: 228), Legrand (1903: 225–26), Masai (1956: 53), Geanakoplos (1976: 191), and Woodhouse (1986: 30). For Plethon's sons, see *PLP* nos. 3629 and 3632. On the estates of the Gemistoi in the Peloponnesus see, most recently, Stefec (2012b).

circles surrounding Silvio Piccolomini (not to be confused with Enea Silvio) in Montemarciano and was working as a secretary in the maritime republic of Ancona by the time he published his address to Pope Leo x.⁴ As “*secretarius* of Ancona”, he might have been involved in the construction of galleys that Pope Leo x had ordered there for service against the Turks.⁵ In any case, Gemisto’s poem exhorts the pope to undertake a crusade against the infidels in general and the Ottoman Turks in particular. In seven chapters, the poet prophesied the outcome of such a crusade in detail, climaxing with the pope’s triumphal return to Rome and his eventual apotheosis. A substantial part of his vision concerns the liberation of *Graecia*, and Gemisto creates an evocative image of his native country.

As the establishment of an independent Greece was generally not a major aim of the powers involved in planning a crusade, Gemisto’s poem reads as a bold attempt to position the liberation of Greece—not just Constantinople—as one of the main goals of the crusading enterprise. As such, his poem contains what seems to be the first politico-territorial representation of Greece, predating the first regional map of Greece—produced by Nikolaos Sophianos in 1540—by more than twenty years. This chapter shows how Gemisto constructed his geopoetical image of Greece. Since Greece did not exist as a well-defined area nor as a unitary territory in the Renaissance, Gemisto’s representation of his fatherland relates to reality in more complex ways. The theoretical problem of imagining Greece before Greece will be illustrated by outlining how the ancient sources, humanists, and cartographers imagined Greece. We need this background to understand the extent of Gemisto’s innovation in the *Protrepticon et pronosticon*. After I have placed Gemisto’s poem in the context of crusade appeals addressed to Pope Leo x, I will reconstruct the textual basis of his image of Greece in order to show exactly how the poet constructed his fatherland (and to demonstrate its ‘constructedness’ in the first place). Taking into account various factors influencing Gemisto’s construction (mainly the historical relevance of certain areas, the logic of crusade rhetoric,

Thierry Ganchou informs me that he has never found Gemisto’s name during his extensive archival prosopographical research in Italian archives (personal correspondence, 15 September 2014).

4 A brief poem of Gemisto to Piccolomini survives in in BA, Cod. 1077, fol. 162^r. Gemisto’s *Protrepticon* is briefly discussed by Manoussakas (1965: 20–23) and Rotolo (1966: 34–38) and cited by Longnon (1921: 521–22). It is discussed by Binner (1980: 207–16) and, in the context of humanist crusade literature, Lamers (2012b) (with extensive bibliography).

5 Setton (1984: 157).

and the immediate audience of his text), I will further explore how the poet turned this carefully constructed and strategically located country into a future political territory.⁶

The Protrepicon et pronosticon and the Crusade Project

Not all popes had been as enthusiastic about the crusade project as Pope Leo X. Like Pope Pius II before him, Leo X was seriously committed to organising a crusade and was prepared to consider reforming the Roman Curia in order to secure papal leadership of the undertaking. Anxious to establish peace and unity in Europe, he sent out legates to prepare for war and himself wrote to kings, princes, and Emperor Maximilian in order to incite them to unite as Christians and jointly take up arms against the Turks. On 3 September 1513, he wrote an encyclical letter to the kings and peoples of Hungary, Poland, Bohemia, Prussia, and Russia in which he described the dangerous and steady advance of the Ottoman Turks, who had overrun large parts of Europe already: Greece, Serbia, Bulgaria, and Bosnia, climaxing, of course, with the fall of Constantinople, which the pope called “the capital of Thrace and the Eastern Empire, once the seat of the great Constantine and of so many faithful emperors”. According to the pope, the Turks had profaned sacred shrines, defiled icons, violated virgins and matrons, and reduced the nobility of Constantinople to servitude.⁷

In the year Gemisto published his poem, in 1516, the urgency of the Turkish problem was felt even more seriously than in the preceding years. In April, the Roman Curia had received the news that twenty-seven Turkish vessels had been seen off the coast some miles from Civitavecchia. New Ottoman victories made the news from the East even more depressing.⁸ There were almost continuous warnings of Ottoman advances into Italy and ongoing negotiations

6 The edition of Konstantinos Sathas (1880) is erratic. Therefore, I cite from Gemisto (1516), on which see Legrand (1903: 225–26). Apart from the old print, the poem survives in a precious parchment manuscript, probably the presentation exemplar (BML, Plut. 34.57). I collated the manuscript and the print and note significant variant readings in the footnotes. For details on the manuscript, see A.M. Bandini (1775: 200), Marzi (1896: 37), and Maracchi Biagiarelli (1971: 21, no. 12). A.M. Bandini (1775: 200) conjectured that the manuscript is an autograph, but there is no conclusive evidence to substantiate this.

7 Setton (1984: 150).

8 Setton (1984: 164–66).

over possible alliances against the Turks, none of them really successful because of the ever-shifting loyalties between the great powers. Until his death in 1521, Pope Leo x lived in constant fear of the Turks. Alarmed by the continuing military successes of the Porte, he called together a specialised committee of eight cardinals to study the logistics of a crusade and existing Ottoman resources, issued several bulls about the crusade, imposing tithes to finance it, and in 1518 sent four cardinals to four principal centres of European power in order to enforce the five years' truce he had imposed upon all Christian powers and help plan the details of the crusade that would, however, never materialise.⁹

Although Gemisto's relationship to the papal court is obscure, his poem shows that he was well aware of the concerns of Leo x, playing on his notorious Philhellenism (see also Chapter 6, pp. 230–32) as well as his leadership ambitions in the crusade. Central to the poem's argument are the usual themes of humanist crusade rhetoric: the necessity of action against the infidel barbarians, the relative ease of winning victories over them, and the benefits that will accrue to the addressee.¹⁰ Unlike most crusade advocates, Gemisto made the Greek cause a central element of his argument. Emphasising the glorious ancestors of the Greeks as well as their natural piety, Gemisto stressed the suffering of the Greek people in order to elicit compassion from his audience. For example, he listed many of the atrocities Pope Leo x had evoked himself in his encyclical letter of 3 September 1513, cited above. According to the poet, the Ottoman Turks violated Greek women and girls and forced young boys to prostitute themselves; young Greeks must do all kinds of dishonourable work such as digging sewers, while others were tortured to death and torn to pieces by raving lions.¹¹ Addressing the pope, he wrote:

Aspice quot gemitus luctusque miserrima tellus
Graecia nunc patitur magnos lacrimasque perennes
Cum videat sine iure premi sua pignora, natos
Qui veluti pecudes per compita perque plateas
Venduntur miseri, proh Iupiter, atque trahuntur.¹²

9 For the Eastern policy of Pope Leo x as well as his crusade plans during the period 1513–17 and their immediate political context, see Setton (1984: 142–71). For the later period (1517–21), see Setton (1984: 173–97).

10 See Heath (1986) and Hankins (1995: 305–06) (without reference to Heath in this context).

11 Gemisto (1516: fols. Aiii^v–Bi^v).

12 Gemisto (1516: fol. Aiii^v).

Behold how many sorrows and huge grief the most miserable land of Greece suffers as well as the endless tears she sheds as she sees that her children are oppressed unjustly and observes her offspring being sold like cattle and, by Jupiter, carried off over crossroads and streets.

Gemisto was not the only Greek patriot who wrote to Leo x in order to incite him into war against the Turks. In addition to Manilio Cabacio Rallo, Markos Mousouros also addressed Leo x in a long Greek poem, known as the *Hymn to Plato*, which he attached to the first Greek edition of Plato's *opera omnia*, published with Aldo in Venice in 1513. Like Gemisto, both Cabacio Rallo and Mousouros in their crusade appeals evoke the sufferings of the good-natured Greeks and prophesy the pope's liberation of Greece

Alluding to the pope's sympathy for the Greeks, Cabacio Rallo, for example, urged Leo x to liberate Greece and predicted his victories over the 'barbarians', calling him a second Fabius and Camillus for the Greek people.¹³ Mousouros, on the other hand, imagined Plato personally descending from Mount Olympus to the city of Rome in order to offer his works to the pope. There, guided by Ianus Lascaris and Pietro Bembo, Plato would incite the pope to liberate his *genos*, not by means of philosophical argument but by restating the traditional themes of humanist crusade rhetoric.¹⁴ Like Gemisto and Rallo, Plato prophesies the liberation of Byzantium, the extirpation of the Ottoman Turks, and the consequential peace and concord that will enable the pope to make Rome the centre of humanist learning.¹⁵ Unlike Cardinal Bessarion (who had dissimulated his Greekness for the princes of Europe in his *Orationes*), Gemisto, Rallo, and Mousouros could all confidently rely on their addressee's philhellenic sympathies to present their Greekness as something appealing and distinctive.

The emphasis on the Greek cause in these crusade appeals is notable in view of the fact that the liberation of Greece or the Greeks—let alone the establishment of a Greek kingdom—was generally not seen as a primary goal of the crusading project as non-Greeks saw it. In the crusade appeals of Giano Damiani and Geronimo Bordoni, for instance, the pope's primary task is presented not so much as to liberate Greece as to protect the Italian peninsula against a barbarian invasion and foreign occupation, which recalls Bessarion's argument in the *Orationes contra Turcas* (see Chapter 3, pp. 123–25). If the Greeks are mentioned, they are either mentioned as allies of the pope, or as one of the

13 Rallo (ed. Lamers 2013: 178, no. 4, ll. 56–69).

14 Mousouros (ed. Legrand 1885c: 110–12, ll. 73–186 = ed. Siphakis 1954: 880–83, ll. 73–186).

15 Mousouros (ed. Legrand 1885c: 110–12, ll. 128–86 = ed. Siphakis 1954: 882–83, ll. 128–86).

Oriental peoples. Bordoni, for instance, mentions the Peloponnesians in the same breath as the Asians and Assyria, and the Thessalians are mentioned in connection with the Phoenicians and Egypt.¹⁶ Apart from this, there also was an explicitly anti-Greek lobby at the papal court of Leo x. Not too long after Leo's election in March 1513, the Camaldulensian monks Paolo Giustiniani and Pietro Quirini wrote a treatise on papal power and dedicated it to the pope. In this *Libellus ad Leonem Decimum*, Giustiniani and Quirini urged the pope to take advantage of the fact that the infidels were at odds among themselves and preach the crusade. Interestingly, they pay particular attention to the situation of the Greeks. They believed that the Greeks would pose great problems during the crusade, as they would resist conversion to Rome due to their stubborn impiety and perversity.¹⁷

Against this background, the emphasis on the future of Greece and the fate of the Greeks in the poems by Rallo, Mousouros, and Gemisto can be regarded as a boldly self-conscious affirmation of Greek interests. Gemisto's poem was the most outspoken in this regard. As determining the political future of Greece (or any other region) was regarded as the difficult task of the diplomat, orators did normally not discuss it in their crusade appeals.¹⁸ As a *vates* or seer-poet, however, Gemisto felt free to be less reticent in expressing his hopes for his fatherland. Before predicting how the pope would Christianise all of Asia and Africa, he prophesied how "pious Greece [would] kneel and send [to the pope], not without gratitude, her leading men and gifts" and would observe his orders in order to become a kingdom in the newly established "imperium Christianum".¹⁹ In the list that follows, Gemisto creates a rich image of his fatherland by evoking places, tribes, rivers, villages, and mountains that make up Greece. In this way, he explained not only the geographical scope of his liberated fatherland but also its political organisation.

Gemisto's Imaginary Geography of Greece

Catalogues such as the list of Greek places are a distinctive feature of the *Protrepticon et pronosticon*. In line with ancient examples of epic writing from

16 On the poems of Damiani and Bordoni in connection with Gemisto's poem, see also Lamers (2012b: 74–76).

17 The treatise, known as *Libellus ad Leonem Decimum* or *De officio pontificis*, is discussed in Setton (1984: 146–67, with the relevant bibliographic references in n. 17). Bianchini (1995) offers an Italian translation with introduction and notes.

18 Setton (1984: 153–54).

19 Gemisto (1516: fols. Eii^r, l. 16–Eii^v, l. 2).

Homer onwards, the poet worked extended lists into the narrative of his text. In the second chapter, he summed up more than ninety protagonists of Greek history; in the third, he spent over three hundred verses enumerating the pope's auxiliaries; in the next, he listed more than two hundred cities, regions, and peoples of Greece, while in the fifth and sixth chapters he cited the names of all the places and peoples from Asia and Africa that the pope and his allies would conquer and Christianise. Although to the modern reader such extensive lists of names may at first glance seem tedious, Gemisto's catalogues in the second and fourth chapters are precisely those places where the poet created and invented an unprecedented image of *Graecia*. Gemisto's list of Greek heroes helps us to understand how the poet connected Greek geography with the ancient past, and how he could present a new and imaginary country in the guise of a past reality. Moreover, his list of Greek place names and ethnonyms in the fourth chapter is pivotal to our understanding of the poet's imaginary geography of Greece and how he constructed it. These lists are therefore, in a sense, the most captivating and telling parts of the whole poem, and will be central to the discussion of his poem in this chapter.²⁰

In the fourth chapter of his poem, Gemisto summed up all regions, peoples, cities, mountains, islands, and villages that would welcome Pope Leo x as their liberator. The first region sending its orators and noblemen with gifts to the pope is "Byzantia tellus", referring to Constantinople with its Thracian hinterlands:

Et struet insignem Ephyreo in colle trophaeum,
 Turcigenum pugnam testantia saxa fugamque
 Excidiumque ingens populi gentisque profanae,
 Barbaricae, nomenque dei dominique Leonis
 Pontificis summi Decimi super omnia scribeb
 Litterulis Latiis, maioribus atque Pelasgis,
 Imperii sui et regni diadema vetusti,
 Totius et generis Graecorum tradet habenas.²¹

20 Such catalogues are also important because they provided humanists with the opportunity to exhibit their knowledge in fields as diverse as mythology and geography. In crusade literature in particular, humanists presented themselves as experts in geography, military arts, and/or history, sometimes in the hope to attain a position in an eventual crusading enterprise. In this context, Gemisto's extended geographical catalogues can be seen as part of his attempt to present himself to Leo x as an expert in the geography of the world. On the issue of expertise in crusade rhetoric, see Meserve (2010).

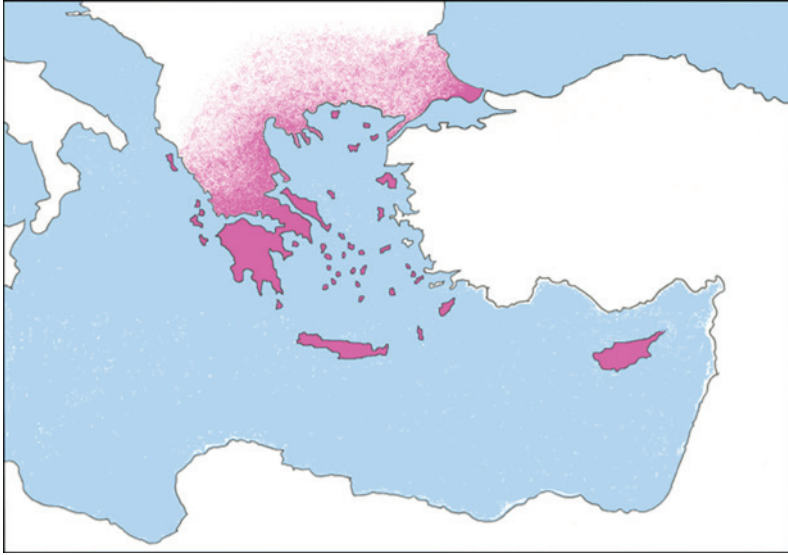
21 Gemisto (1516: fol. Eiii^r). Note that in the Florentine manuscript of Gemisto's poem (BML, Plut. 34.57, fol. 33^r), it is Greece who sets up the monument due to the transposition of ll. 97–101 after l. 110.

And Byzantium will erect a memorial on the Corinthian Hill, a monument in stone that testifies to the battle and the defeat of the Turks and the great overthrow of a people and a race both profane and barbarian, and on top of all this it will write the name of God and that of Lord Leo the Tenth Pontiff in small Latin letters and in larger Pelasgian ones and it shall hand over the diadem of its empire and its ancient power as well as the reins over the entire race of the Greeks.

From Byzantium, the focus shifts to places in the Peloponnesus (see nos. 2–60 in Appendix 2, pp. 293–313). As the catalogue of peoples, cities, and regions progresses, it increasingly shifts the reader's attention away from the Peloponnesus to modern Central Greece, especially to Attica, Athens and the adjacent regions of Phocis, Boeotia and, at the end of this section of the list, also Thermopylae and Mount Oeta (nos. 61–99). After this, Gemisto summed up the islands in the Ionian, Aegean, and Mediterranean Seas that he saw as part of Greece (nos. 100–168). These include the islands belonging to modern Greece, Cyprus, and islands that are now part of Turkey. It is only after summing up the Greek islands that the Northern areas are mentioned: Thessaly, Macedonia, and Epirus (nos. 169–218). Gemisto's imaginary Greece thus roughly covers the regions from Constantinople in the East to the Ionian Islands in the West, and from Crete in the South to the Pindus and Balkan Mountains in the North (see Map 1).

Not all of the more than two hundred place names and ethnonyms Gemisto heaped up in his catalogue can be identified with certainty. Still, the map immediately shows that the geographical extent of Gemisto's Greece is notably constricted in different respects. Regions in the East that could have been claimed for his fatherland on the basis of, for example, the sphere of influence of classical Athens in the Mediterranean, Alexander's Hellenistic Empire, or the Byzantine Empire at its height (see Map 2) were consistently excluded from Gemisto's Greek world.²² Most notably, the poet excluded the Anatolian coast and Trebizond, traditionally associated with Greek civilisation and certainly part of the aspirations of the Byzantine Empire, as Cardinal Bessarion recalled in his memorandum (see Chapter 3, pp. 104–05). Gemisto also excluded Magna Graecia in the West. Areas of Sicily and the Italian peninsula that had been under

22 The Hellenistic succession states of Lysimachus and Antiochus are only mentioned cursorily in the fifth chapter (Gemisto 1516: fol. Giii^r, l. 29; Giv^v, l. 1). For some examples of the use of Alexander the Great in claims to imperial power in the East in the fourteenth century, see Matzukis (2006: 116–17).



MAP 1 *A cartographical impression of Gemisto's "Graecia".*

the influence of Greek civilisation from the ancient colonisers of the eighth century on—as discussed in Constantine Lascaris' *Vitae philosophorum*—are left outside Gemisto's imaginary geography of Greece.

As we shall see throughout this chapter, there are several factors that helped to shape Gemisto's image of his fatherland: the political and cultural relevance of individual areas and places, the conventions of crusade rhetoric, and the audience of Gemisto's poem all contributed to how the poet imagined Greece. Before examining in closer detail how Gemisto constructed his particular image of *Graecia*, the next section will first show the singularity of the poet's representation of his fatherland, which does not follow particular literary or cartographical models.

Imagining Greece before Greece

In premodern Europe, Greece was not a clear-cut geographical, cultural, or territorial entity.²³ Even though the label *Graeci* was used to denote speakers of

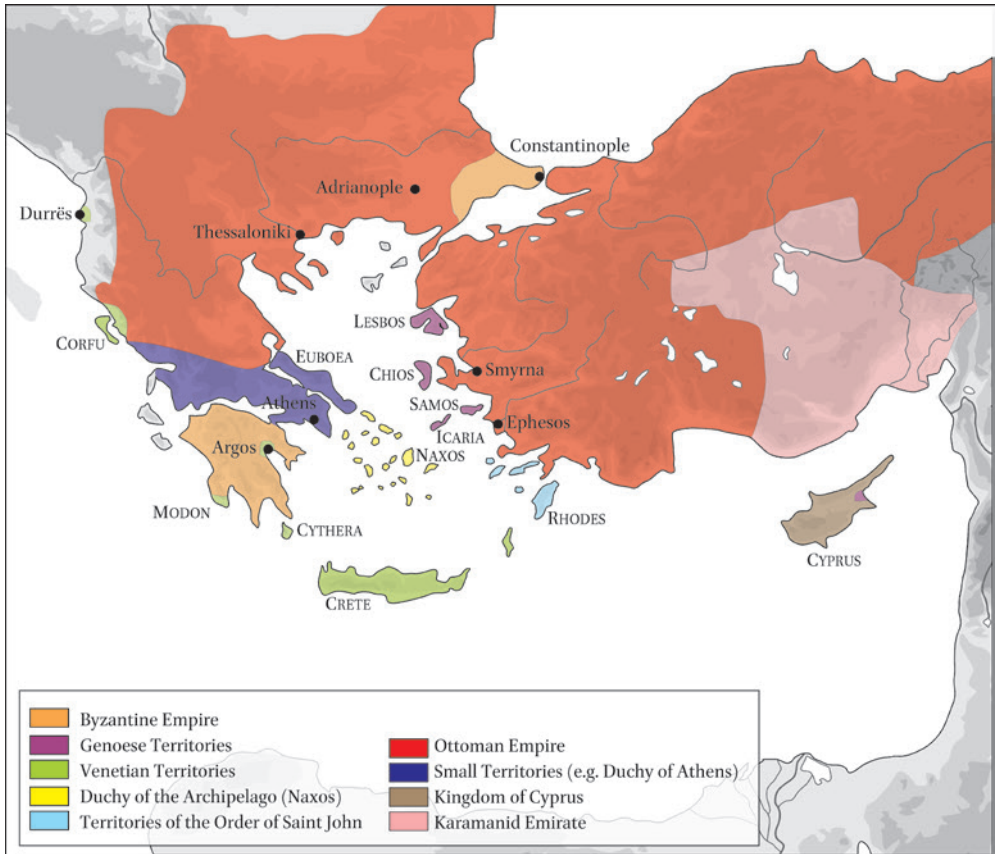
23 Cf. Prontera (1991: 78).



MAP 2 *The Byzantine Empire under Justinian I (ca. 565).*



MAP 3 *The territorial situation after the battle of Manzikert (1071).*



MAP 4 *The territorial situation shortly before 1453.*

the Greek language or the Orthodox, they were not automatically connected to a well-defined territory. When humanists thought of Greece, they primarily had the cultural sphere of ancient Greece in mind. When they imagined something like a modern Greece, they relied on ancient sources, projecting the often confused notions of Greece they found there onto their own time.²⁴ In the ancient sources, “Hellas” or “Graecia”, could, most comprehensively, refer to the whole community of Greeks, also in the colonies in Ionia and elsewhere. Generally, however, it referred to Northern Greece south of Thermopylae,

24 See, on the sources of humanist geographical knowledge in general Bouloux (2002: 143–76). On the humanist contribution to the geographical representation of Greece in particular, see now Tolias (2012: 61–131).

sometimes with the inclusion of the Peloponnesus, or to the entire region from the Peloponnesus to Epirus and Thessaly inclusively.²⁵

Italian humanists generally reflect the ancient co-occurrence of a narrow geographical image of Greece (best captured by Ptolemy and Pliny) and a broader cultural or linguistic one (best reflected in ancient historians and the orators). To give only one example, Enea Silvio Piccolomini (later Pope Pius II) equated “Graecia” with “Hellas” and “Attica” in his influential *De Europa*, in which he described Europe under Emperor Frederick III (r. 1452–93). In his words, Greece extends “from Boeotia towards the Isthmus of Corinth with the part of Attica that is called Megaris”.²⁶ In this view, indebted to Pliny the Elder,²⁷ “Graecia” is part of the Greek-speaking world, but does not really encompass it. In a speech delivered after the fall of Constantinople in 1453, by contrast, Piccolomini addressed Greece in a rhetorical apostrophe in which he lamented over the destruction of ancient cities such as Thebes, Athens, Mycenae, Larissa, Sparta, and Corinth. “If you seek their walls”, he continued,

you will not even find ruins. Nobody would be able to point out the land where they stood. Often our men look for Greece in Greece herself; from the ruins of so many towns only Constantinople survives, founded by Constantine, the first emperor of that name, to parallel the city of Rome (...). But now that the Turks conquer and possess what Greek power once held, I fear that Greek letters are at an end.²⁸

25 Cf. *LSJ* s.v. “Ελλάς”; *NP* s.v. “Hellas”, “Hellenen”. For useful discussions of the geographical extent of Hellas in ancient Greek literature, see, in ascending chronological order, esp. Bearzot (1988), Prontera (1991), Hall (2002: 126–29), and W. Hutton (2005: 58–61).

26 “[Post Beotiam] sequitur HELLAS, quae a nostris appellata est Graecia; Acten (id est littus) prisci vocavere; mutato deinde nomine Acticam dixere. (...) Protenditur autem Actica ex Boeotia usque Isthmum corynthiacum parte sui, quae appellatur Megaris” (Piccolomini, ed. Van Heck 2001: 87–88, ll. 2351–69). In his ensuing description of the Peloponnesus, Piccolomini called it the “bulwark of Greece”, suggesting that the peninsula is an integral part of Greece. Even so construed, Greece is not an encompassing geographical notion.

27 Plin. *NH* 4.23. It must be noted that Pliny’s idea of Greece is equivocal, on which see Detlefsen (1909: 51).

28 “O nobilis Graecia, ecce nunc tuum finem, nunc demum mortua es. Heu quot olim urbes fama rebusque potentes sunt extinctae? Vbi nunc Thebae, ubi Athenae, ubi Mycenae, ubi Larissa, ubi Lacedaemon, ubi Corinthiorum civitas, ubi alia memoranda oppida, quorum si muros quaeras, nec ruinas invenias? Nemo solum in quo iacuerunt, queat ostendere: Graeciam saepe nostri in ipsa Graecia requirunt, sola ex tot cadaveribus civitatum Constantinopolis superat (...) per Constantinum primum Imperatorem eius nominis in

In this context, ‘Greece’ referred to more than the geographical region of *Hellas* and *Graecia* alone. It is not merely a district of the Greek-speaking world, as it had been in *De Europa*, but an umbrella-term that covers both ancient Greek sites and the Christian metropolis of Constantinople. Such a view of Greece as a cultural realm evokes a more complex and comprehensive Greek geography, comprised of ancient sites like Athens, Thebes (Boeotia), and Larissa (Thessaly), but also the Byzantine capital Constantinople and parts of Thrace.

Even on maps of the period, Greece is an elusive portion of the globe.²⁹ Cartographical representations of Greece appeared relatively late in the Latin West: regional maps of Greece were produced not until 1540, when Nikolaos Sophianos first published his regional map of “all of Greece” (“tota Graecia”), which was followed only by Rhigas Velestinlis’ famous map of 1797.³⁰ The maps attached to editions of Ptolemy’s *Geography*—either in manuscript or, from 1477 onwards, in print—dominated cartography until they were overtaken by modern explorations and discoveries by the middle of the sixteenth century. These maps do not, however, picture Greece in a spatially coherent manner.³¹ Editions of Ptolemy normally comprised a separate map depicting a part of the Balkans, entitled *Decima et Ultima Europae Tabula* (The Tenth and Last Map of Europe, see Map 7). This map depicted the regions of Macedonia, the Peloponnesus, Achaia, Epirus, Crete, and the Cyclades.³² On most early maps, Greece is not explicitly mentioned, either on the map itself, or in the caption. The *ultima tabula* of Europe was presented as a map of “Graecia” for the first time as late as 1540, in Sebastian Münster’s famous edition of Ptolemy, reprinted in 1542.³³ According to the outline on the reverse of the map, Greece coincided

aemulationem Romanae urbis erecta... (..) At nunc vincentibus Turcis et omnia possidentibus quae Graeca potentia tenuit, vereor ne de literis Graecis omnino sit actum” (Piccolomini, ed. Hopper 1571: 681).

29 When I wrote the body of this Chapter, Tolias (2012) had not yet been published. For my information on cartographical representations of Greece, I relied on the useful catalogue of printed maps of Greece dating from the period 1477–1800 compiled by Zacharakis (1982, 1992, 2009). I used the second edition of 1992 instead of the third of 2009 because it is compatible with the helpful concordance in Tolias (2012: 534–35).

30 Tolias (2001: 8).

31 For an overview of early modern editions of Ptolemy with maps of the Greek world, see Zacharakis (1992: 133–37).

32 In early modern editions of Ptolemy’s maps, Thrace was included in “Tabula ix” of Europe, while Cyprus was on “Tabula iv” of Asia together with the coast of Syria (Tolias 2012: 62).

33 Tolias (2012: 39). In Johann Reger’s edition of Ptolemy’s *Geography* (Ulm, 1486), the anonymous treatise “Locorum ac mirabilium mundi descriptio” presents “Graecia” as a

with the regions of Macedonia, Epirus, Achaea, and the Peloponnesus together with Euboea, Crete, and the adjacent islands. If we look at the map itself, however, we find both the labels “Hellas” and “Graecia” without clear demarcations of their geographical position or scope (see Map 5). While on the map “Hellas” and “Graecia” are located west of Locris, east of Acarnania, and south of Thessaly, Ptolemy’s own definition of Hellas suggests that it must coincide with Achaea.³⁴ This is only one example out of many in which there is confusion over the exact location and extent of ancient Greece in cartography.³⁵

Maps of modern Greece are also vague in their cartographical delineations of the region. Editors of Ptolemy’s *Geography* sometimes added an updated map of the modern Balkans to their editions. Unlike the historical maps, the modern *tabulae* present modern place names instead of the ancient ones. The Peloponnesus, for example, is called the Morea, the Greek western coast Albania, and southern mainland Greece is referred to as the Duchy of Athens.³⁶ Even though the exact borders of “Graecia” remain implicit, these maps show that the region was distinguished from regions such as Bosnia, Serbia, and Sclavonia. This appears from their captions displaying “Graecia” as a distinct entity, such as the *Tabula moderna Bossinae, Serviae, Graeciae et Sclavoniae* in the Strasbourg-editions of 1513, the first edition of Ptolemy with a map of ‘modern Greece’ (see Map 6), reprinted in 1520. The position of the label “Graecia” in the centre of this map suggests that the region was understood as coinciding with the entire area south of the Balkan Mountains.³⁷ Generally, however, it is unclear how ‘modern’ Greece must be delineated geographically and if it has to be considered a religious, linguistic, historical, or cultural entity on the European map.³⁸

self-standing area, comprising Dalmatia, Cyprus, Hellas (probably referring to Central Greece), Thessalia, Macedonia, Achaea (meaning the Peloponnesus), Crete, and the Cycladic islands (see Tolias 2012: 62).

34 Ptol. *Geog.* 3.15.1.

35 Only a glance at the wide variety of maps collected in Tolias (2012) and Zacharakis (1992) shows the diverse views on the location and extent of Greece.

36 Zacharakis (1992: 11). It must be noted that ‘modern’ does often not mean ‘up-to-date’. So, for instance, the reference to the Duchy of Athens on some modern maps of the first half of the sixteenth century does not refer to contemporaneous realities (the Florentine Duchy of Athens fell to the Ottoman Turks in 1456). On the ways Ptolemy was modernised during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, see also Tolias (2012: 61–71).

37 Tolias (2012: 67).

38 To classify such Ptolemaic maps attached to editions of the *Geography* as “maps of Greece”, as does Christos Zacharakis (1982, 1992, 2009) in his very useful overview work



MAP 5 *Ptolemy's tenth map of Europe (1540).*

When Gemisto composed his image of Greece, therefore, he was by no means replicating a standard vision of the Greek world. His representation of the country did not correspond neatly to what he found in the ancient sources or on the most important maps of his day. Nor did he create an image of his homeland that corresponded to the remainders of the Eastern Roman Empire (see below, p. 264). In his representation of his native country, Gemisto fused the vaguely inclusive cultural notion of Greece with the notion of a geographically more or less coherent space and transformed it, in the context of his prophecy, into a political territory.

of “maps of Greece”, is slightly misleading as they represent some *regions of Europe*, and not Greece properly speaking. Toliaf (2012: 58–131) explores the problem of cartographical definition in more detail.



MAP 6 Map of modern Greece and adjacent regions (1513).

It was over twenty years after Gemisto's poem was published that the first truly regional map of Greece was published by another Greek, the Corfiot scholar Nikolaos Sophianos.³⁹ Sophianos produced a cartographical image of Greece that did not correspond to any geographical unit or political territory described by one single ancient historian or geographer nor to any political reality in past or present.⁴⁰ By combining the ninth and tenth maps of Ptolemy's *Geography*

39 For overviews of Sophianos' life and works, see Legrand (1885: CLXXXVII–CXCIV), Karrow (1993), Layton (1994: no. 16, esp. 460–72), and Tolia (2006: 151–53). Apart from a cartographer, Sophianos was also a grammarian who wrote the first grammar of spoken Greek (ed. Legrand 1874). He moreover translated Plutarch into modern Greek (see Morales Ortiz 2005) and wrote the Greek text for Agostino Ricchi's *Commedia dei tre tiranni* (see Viti 1966).

40 Tolia (2006: 168), but for a possible antecedent, see Tolia (2012: 62). Although the map was printed for the first time in 1540, its earliest surviving copy dates from 1545. Sophianos' map became an authoritative cartographical image after it influenced Sebastian Münster's representation of Greece in his *Cosmography* (1544), and became



MAP 7 Ptolemy's tenth map of Europe (1490).



MAP 8 Ptolemy's first map of Asia (1490).

(see Map 7 and Map 8, respectively), Sophianos' map unites in one single cartographical picture the Peloponnesus, Achaea, Epirus, and Macedonia with all of the Balkans south of the Danube, together with Western Anatolia and, additionally, a small part of Southern Italy or Magna Graecia (see Map 9).⁴¹ Sophianos avoids Byzantine and Ottoman place names in favour of the ancient names derived from the ancient historians, especially Strabo and Pausanias. His "tota Graecia" is an assemblage of geographical data derived from Greek literature that can be seen as an attempt to visualise, cartographically, the complex history of the Greek world, from the earliest mythic times until its Roman period. Even though the map focuses, historically speaking, on the Roman imperial period, it ranges from mythical and Homeric times (invoked by places such as Iolkos, Troy, and Mycenae) to late Roman and early Byzantine history (represented by places such as Nicopolis, Adrianopolis, and Constantinople).⁴²

As George Toliaş has argued, Sophianos' representation aimed to "restore the cartographical image of ancient Greece and thus to stipulate that Greece was a historical, geographical and, thanks to the names of regions and seas lettered in Greek, linguistic reality, not just a scholarly and artistic idea regained through Latin reminiscences".⁴³ By unifying the full geographical extent of Hellenism in one single map under the flag of "Graecia", Sophianos inaugurated, in Toliaş' words, "the ideological construct of Hellenism as a unifying space".⁴⁴ Gemisto's poem is an example of the same idea, even if it is expressed in a different medium with different purposes and predates Sophianos' map by more than twenty years.

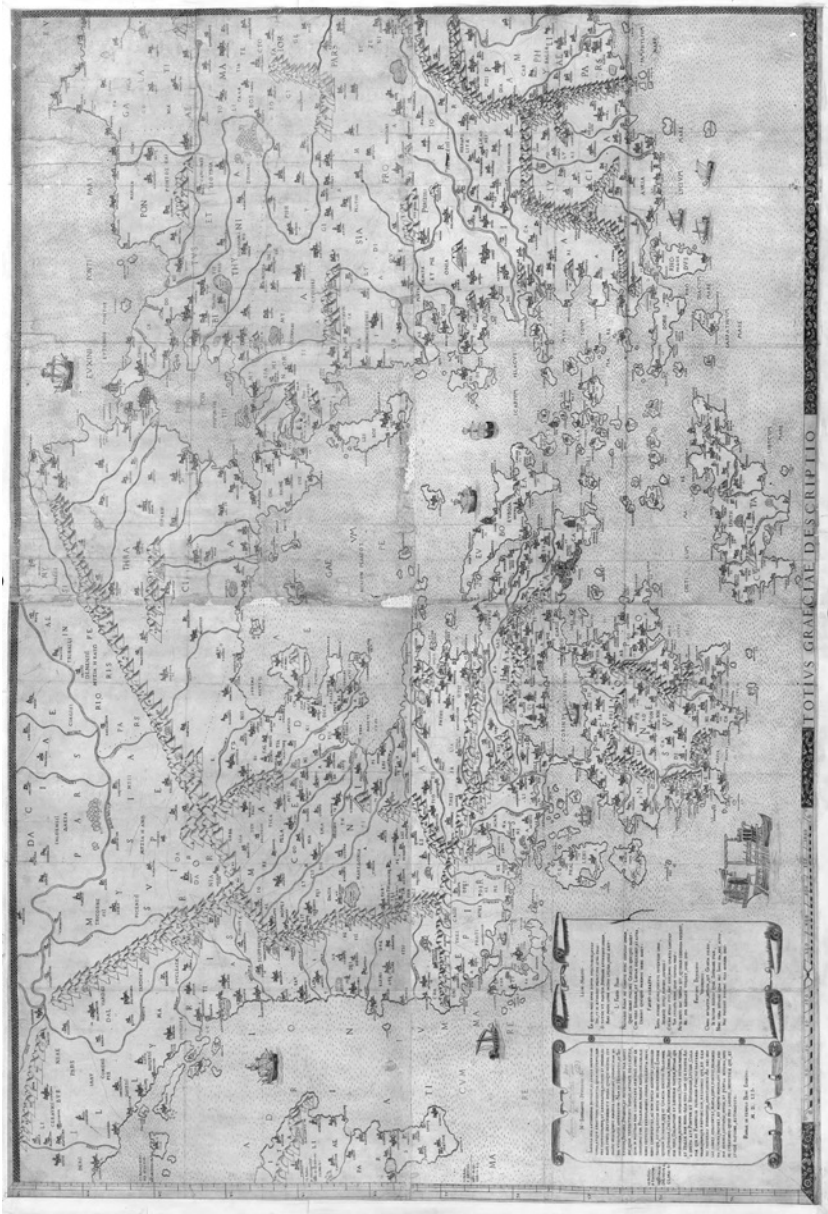
canonised by its inclusion in the *Parergon* of Abraham Ortelius as "Graecia, Sophiani" in 1597 (Toliaş 2001: 3–6). The only comprehensive studies on the map are by George Toliaş: Toliaş (2006) explores it with particular attention to its sources and function, while Toliaş (2001) compares the maps of Sophianos, Valestinlis, and Paparrigopoulos. See also Toliaş (2012: 87–93) with splendid reproductions of the relevant maps. An early contribution to the study of Sophianos' map is Hamel (1962).

41 In this, Sophianos followed the example of the first Latin edition of the *Geography* with maps (Bologna, 1477), which omitted the first map of Asia and attached its western section to the tenth map of Europe (see Toliaş 2012: 62).

42 If we want to find an implicit political agenda behind Sophianos' map, Toliaş (2006: 168) suggests that its reference to both Greek and Roman antiquity appeals to the Christian universalism prevailing in Rome under the humanist popes before the Council of Trent (1545–64).

43 Toliaş (2006: 168).

44 Toliaş (2001: 17).



MAP 9 Nikolaos Sophianos "Totius Graeciae Descriptio" (1552).

As a work of literature, the *Protrepicon et pronosticon* pays tribute to a ‘mapping impulse’ in Renaissance literature, not only in its representation of Greece but also in the image it paints of the world at large. Ptolemy’s maps in particular inspired Renaissance writers to adopt specialised cartographical data and modes of representation into their literary works. The heroes of Ariosto, for instance, whose *Orlando furioso* was published in the same year as Gemisto’s poem, travelled over Ptolemaic maps.⁴⁵ In particular, the many names in Gemisto’s poem might evoke the densely packed place names of portolan charts, while its general emphasis on the mytho-history of the places it maps recalls the medieval *mappaemundi*.⁴⁶ Nevertheless, it seems that Gemisto did not use maps as his source of inspiration. In shaping “Graecia”, the poet’s main source was not Ptolemy’s *Geography* or specific maps, but Latin literature.

Greece through a Latin Lens

Although Gemisto employed the rhetoric of restoration (the diadem shall be *returned*: “restituēt”, and ancient power is *given back*: “reddidit”), his “Graecia” was unprecedented.⁴⁷ If we analyse the textual tissue of Gemisto’s Greece in closer detail, we find that his homeland is a bricolage of Latin sources that the poet presented as an ancient *status quo* that Pope Leo x would restore. As can be deduced from the names Gemisto listed in his catalogue, he sometimes took them from Statius’ *Thebaid*, a Latin epic in twelve books about the expedition of the Seven against Thebes. Some place names (for example, Amphigenia and Aepy) actually only occur in this work, and many of the short descriptions Gemisto worked into his catalogue (especially in his list of places in the Peloponnesus) are derived from it. For example, he qualifies the fields bordering upon the banks of the Eurotas River as “olive-bearing” (“oliviferi”),

45 See here Cachey (2007: 451, 456–58) and Conley (2007: 402).

46 This is not the place to elaborate on the ‘mapping impulse’ (Cachey 2014: 200) in Gemisto’s poem, but I plan to visit this elsewhere.

47 In this respect, Gemisto’s representation of Greece differs from the famous *imagines Germaniae* by Celtis and Bebel, who relied on Tacitus’ treatise *De Germania* and critically responded to the images of Germany created by Italian humanists such as Enea Silvio Piccolomini. The *imagines Germaniae* are studied in the context of the struggle between German and Italian humanists over the control of representing *Germania* most recently, and most extensively, in Krebs (2005).

echoing Statius *Theb.* 4.227.⁴⁸ Elsewhere, he refers to “gloomy Tyrea, which reaped the harvest of Spartan gore” (“et quae Spartanum Thyre legit atra cruorem”), alluding to the constant strife between Argives and Spartans, and adapting Statius’ formulation in *Theb.* 4.48 (“Lacedaemonium Thyrea lectura cruorem”). As the Appendix shows, there are many more examples where Gemisto took his short descriptions from Statius (see p. 294, n. 3). His reliance on Statius is also suggested by forms of names that are specific to the textual tradition of the *Thebaid*. The poet mentions “pecorosa Philos” (4.138), derived from *Theb.* 4.45, where modern editions read “pecorosa Phlius”; he also lists “Archemenos”, recorded as a variant reading in *Theb.* 4.295 (where the modern editions have “Orchomenos”).⁴⁹

Gemisto’s main source, however, was Pliny the Elder’s *Naturalis historia*. The places that the poet mentioned in his catalogue are largely derived from Pliny’s account of the third gulf of Europe, beginning at the Mountains of Khimarra and ending at the Dardanelles.⁵⁰ The textual basis for his image of Greece appears in a small handful of variant readings of place names used by Gemisto that are—judging from modern critical apparatuses and several old prints—typical of the Plinian tradition. This does not involve common variant spellings such as “Cremion” for “Cremmyon” or “Zacinchus” for “Zacynthus”, but truly alternative readings like “Arnoxē” instead of “Oxiae” and “Boggillia” for “Aegilia”: variants I was able to find in the tradition of Pliny’s encyclopaedia only. In his catalogue of Macedonian places, for example, Gemisto mentioned a town called “Oloros”. While “Oloros” is only attested in certain manuscripts and early editions of Pliny, “Aloros” is the form found in Pomponius Mela and also, for instance, in the important encyclopedia of Raffaele Maffei, which

48 Modern editions of Statius (including the modern Loeb-edition of Shackleton Bailey) generally offer “swanny” as qualification of the Eurotas (“oloriferi Eurotae”). See the critical apparatus in the Teubner-edition of Klotz and Klinnert (2001) *ad loc.*

49 “Archomenos” is only recorded in critical editions of Statius (see the critical apparatuses of Klotz and Klinnert 2001 and Hill 1983), while it seems that “Orchomenos” appears as early as the 1502 edition of Statius’ text by Aldo Manuzio. In the critical editions of Pliny (*NH* 4.36) and Mela (2.43), “Archemenos” is not attested as a variant reading of “Orchomenos”. See here also Appendix 2 on pp. 293–313.

50 Plin. *NH* 4.1–74, roughly followed by Solinus 7.1–11.34. Mela, on the other hand, starts with Thrace and Macedonia and concludes with Epirus, while including the islands of the Mediterranean in an appendix to the second book of his *Chorographia*, inserted after his account of the Iberian peninsula (Mela 2.2–3 and 2.7 for the islands).

had been published in 1506 and again in 1511.⁵¹ Similarly, Gemisto's "Physella" ("Myscella" in Mayhoff's critical edition of Pliny) is a variant reading introduced only in the printed edition of Pliny's encyclopaedia of 1496, probably on the basis of Ermolao Barbaro's *Castigationes Plinianae*, which records the older reading "Physcella", found in some manuscripts, as an alternative.⁵² There are a few more examples of this kind, and, taken together, they suggest that Gemisto used either a Pliny manuscript, or (what is more likely) an early printed edition of the text, for example Giacomo Britannico's recension (Venice, 1496).⁵³

Emblematic of the constructedness of Gemisto's image of Greece is his mentioning of the island "Anaxo, very famous for the tomb of honourable Homer" ("Maeonidaeque pii tumulo clarissima Anaxo"). There is no island with the name "Anaxo" purported to be Homer's last resting place. There is, in fact, no island called "Anaxo" at all. Both the name of the unknown island and its connection with Homer's tomb can be explained from a specific passage in Pliny's encyclopedia, where he refers to "Ios, eighteen miles from Naxos, venerable as the burial place of Homer": "Ios a Naxo xviii, Homeri sepulchro veneranda..." (Plin. *NH* 4.69). The reading "Anaxo" resulted from a misinterpretation of this specific passage from Pliny. Apparently, Gemisto read an enumeration (*Ios, Anaxo,...*), where there is a descriptive phrase (*Ios, a Naxo...*).⁵⁴ It is somewhat ironic that Gemisto fashioned his fatherland on the authority of a Latin author like Pliny, while it did not occur to him that the famous burial place of Homer, "Anaxo", did not exist. Such examples make it abundantly clear that Gemisto's image of Greece is not so much based on the poet's impressive knowledge of Greek geography, as has been suggested,⁵⁵ but on his selective reading of Statius' *Thebaid* and Pliny's *Naturalis historia*.

51 See Plin. *NH* 4.34 with critical apparatus (ed. Mayhoff). Cf. Mela 2.35 and Maffei (1511: fol. lxxxv^v).

52 Barbaro (ed. Pozzi 1973: 241).

53 This is also suggested, for instance, by Gemisto's spelling of the city where the Macedonian kings were buried ("Aege"). All the printed editions of Pliny's texts before 1496 read "Egle", while the 1496 edition of Bartolomeo Zani reads "Aegae". This reading was also proposed by Barbaro (ed. Pozzi 1973: 234).

54 A misreading like "Anaxo" is not recorded in the critical apparatus of Mayhoff's Teubner edition of Pliny's text. A comparable misreading is, however, recorded for "a Pylo" in Plin. *NH* 4.14. In his apparatus criticus, Mayhoff records variant readings such as "aplio", "aphilo", and "apilo", all due to the same sort of misreading. Note that in his *Castigationes Plinianae* (1492), Barbaro (ed. Pozzi 1973: 275) proposed to replace "Scyros a Naxo" by "Ios a Naxo".

55 Binner (1980: 207–16).

Gemisto's Re-Historicisation of the Greek World

Although Gemisto's Greece is distilled from the poet's reading of Roman authors, this is not to say that he blindly copied his Latin sources. The major difference with Pliny resides in the way the poet associated the places he listed with the past. Pliny asserted that he had often included the bare names ("nuda nomina") of places with as much brevity as possible and as they were before they had any reputations (*NH* 3.2). His lists of names therefore situate places in the order of things as Pliny saw it, without the burden of their reputations and histories ("fama").⁵⁶ While Pliny is accordingly known for his "de-historicised fact",⁵⁷ Gemisto *re-historicised* the places and peoples he extracted from his source text. In this, he did not restore the places to what we would now call their 'proper' historical contexts but closely associated them with the mytho-history Pliny had generally tried to avoid.

We get the best idea of the way in which Gemisto reworked his source text if we briefly compare a passage from Gemisto's poem with its source:

Pliny *NH* 4.24–25

A Piraeo x'l'v' Sunium promunturium, Thoricos promunturium, Potamos, Steria, *Brauron*, quondam oppida, *Rhamnus* pagus, locus Marathon, campus Thriasius, oppidum Melita et *Oropus* in confinio Boeotiae. [25] Cuius Anthedon, Onchestos, *Thespieae* liberum oppidum, Lebadea nec cedentes Athenis claritate quae cognominantur Boeotiae *Thebae*, duorum numinum Liberi atque Herculis, ut volunt, patria.

Gemisto (1516: fol. Eiii^r, ll. 15–20)

Thespiea fatidica et *Rhamnus* tua tetrica sedes,
Diva potens, quae sponte feros nimiumque superbos
Elatosque premis, nec non Cerealis Eleusis
Miletumque Aulisque potens ubi Graia iuventus
Dardana regna petens classem conscenderat olim,
*Brauron*que armipotens, *Oropus* mitisque Tanagra...

⁵⁶ See here Doody (2010: 67–68).

⁵⁷ Doody (2010: 67).

At the distance of forty-five miles from the Piraeus is the Promontory of Sunium. There is also the Promontory of Thoricos; Potamos, Steria, and Brauron, once towns, the village Rhamnus, the place Marathon, the Thriasian plain, the town Melita, and Oropus upon the confines of Boeotia. [25] To which belong Anthedon, Onchestus, the free town of Thespieae, Lebadea, and the city that is no less famous than Athens, Thebes, surnamed Boeotian, and, they would have it, the home of two divinities, Liber and Hercules. Prophetic Thespiea and Rhamnus, your gloomy dwellingplace, mighty goddess, freely suppressing those who are untamed, too proud, and arrogant; Eleusis, sacred to Ceres; and [Cretan] Miletus and mighty Aulis, where the Greek youth once mounted their ship for Troy; Brauron, mighty in war, Oropus, and mild Tanagra...

In the passage from the *Naturalis historia* quoted above, Pliny calls Brauron, Rhamnus, and Thespieae “quondam oppidum”, “pagus”, and “liberum oppidum”, respectively.⁵⁸ Apart from his mild scepticism about Thebes being the home of Liber and Hercules, Pliny’s description is typically confined to “bare names” with a minimum of extra information beyond the usual administrative *formulae*.⁵⁹ In the passage from the *Protrepticon et pronosticon* cited above, Gemisto removed Brauron, Rhamnus, and Thespieae from their imperial or ‘administrative’ context by omitting the Roman-imperial formulas used by Pliny. In order to evoke the ancient past of his country, Gemisto instead added short descriptions and epithets to the names in his catalogue. Sometimes he adapted these formulas from Statius’ *Thebaid*, but he also took some from Horace and Vergil, adapting them to his text, and invented some others himself.⁶⁰ In the case of Thespieae, he replaced the Roman formula “liberum oppidum” with the poetic epithet “fatidica”, associated with prophecy and oracles, which he elsewhere, following Ovid, applied to Apollo.⁶¹ In so doing, he

58 On the role of the *formulae provinciarum* in Pliny, see Detlefsen (1908).

59 The passage is discussed in a similar context in Doody (2010: 68–69).

60 For an overview of Gemisto’s descriptions, see Appendix 2 on pp. 293–313.

61 Compare “fatidicus Phoebus” (Gemisto 1516: fol. Eiii^v, l. 22) with “deus fatidicus” (Ov. *Fast.* 2.262).

evoked the city's vicinity to the Muses of Mount Helicon (who had endowed Hesiod with the ability to foretell the future, Hes. *Theog.* 32) and perhaps to Apollo, whose oracle might have been in the neighbouring town of Eutresis (St. Byz. s.v. "Εὔτρησις"). Similarly, Gemisto transformed Rhamnus from an anonymous village or "pagus" in Pliny's text into the home of Nemesis, also known as Rhamnusia, the goddess of justice, who was responsible for punishing human arrogance. For some, Gemisto's rhetorical apostrophe to the goddess might have recalled the memory of the colossal marble statue of Nemesis at Rhamnus, reputedly by Phidias (Plin. *NH* 36.17, Paus. 1.83.2). Removing Brauron from the imperial context, the poet called the town "armipotens" ("mighty in war"). In this way, he recalled the town's involvement in Theseus' successful campaign against Creon of Thebes, who had denied the Argive widows the right to bury their dead relatives (see Stat. *Theb.* 12.615).⁶² In the same passage, Gemisto evoked the cult of Demeter (Ceres) and Persephone at Eleusis by styling the "oppidum" of Pliny's text (*NH* 4.23), with a formulation also used by Statius in *Theb.* 12.627, "Cerealis". Apart from ancient cult and monuments, Gemisto sometimes related the places he mentioned to the mytho-history of Greece. In the passage just quoted, for instance, he referred to Aulis as the place where the Greek fleet had rallied before sailing off to Troy, while Pliny elsewhere dryly informed his readers that it was "famous for its capacious harbour" (*NH* 4.26: "aulis capaci nobilis portu").

Very much unlike Pliny's lists of names without histories, free to form new links within the eternal present of imperial geography,⁶³ Gemisto's catalogue consistently connects places with events, scenes, or figures from the ancient Greek past. In other parts of his catalogue, he evoked, among others, Odysseus (with Ithaca), Minos and Pasiphaë (with Crete), Sappho and Phaon (with Lesbos), the Colossus of Rhodes, and Ajax (with Phthia). In this way, he created a modern Greek landscape, which is at the same time thoroughly mythic. Only when he listed Athos did Gemisto add a short description that referred to his own time, stating that the place "was dedicated to monks" ("monacis dicatus Athos").⁶⁴ In this way, Gemisto's use of Pliny as a source closely resembles the way in which the Florentine scholar-poet Francesco Berlinghieri had

62 The word "armipotens" (in the sense of "able in arms") may also evoke the goddess Artemis (Diana), whose cult was popular at Brauron. However, "armipotens" was normally used as an epithet for Mars or Minerva, not Diana (see *OLD* s.v. "armipotens"). Diana was called "armiger" ("armed, armour-bearing") by Statius in *Theb.* 9.604.

63 Doody (2010: 72).

64 Gemisto (1516: fol. Fi^r, l. 10). The manuscript has "habitatus" instead of "dicatus" in rasura (BML, Plut. 34.57, fol. 38^v, l. 13).

previously transformed Ptolemy's *Geography* into a work of Tuscan poetry in his *Geographia* of 1482—but this is a conceptual resemblance and not a historical connection between the poems.⁶⁵

Gemisto also reminded his readers of the glorious ancient past of Greece in a catalogue of over ninety protagonists of Greek history in the second book of his poem (see Appendix 1, pp. 283–93). Stressing the connection between geography and history, he claimed that Greece had stopped *producing* heroes like those he listed. He even used the verb “generare” in this context, as if Greece really was to be regarded as the mother of these men.⁶⁶ In this way, Gemisto linked each of them individually to “Graecia”. His Greek heroes cover the major time period of heroic myth, interspersed with some later historical figures, and fall into three main categories: heroes associated with the Argonauts and the Calydonian hunt (nos. 1–41 in Appendix 1), those associated with the Homeric epics (nos. 42–76), and those associated with ancient Greek politics (nos. 77–95).⁶⁷ Not presented in strict chronological order, most names can be connected with some battle for freedom or personal sacrifice for the fatherland. Apart from the names of Greek heroes who fought in Troy, connected with the earliest stages of Greek history and, significantly, Greek resistance against an Oriental power, Gemisto also mentioned, for example, Codrus (the mythical king of Athens who voluntarily sacrificed his life in order to save the city), Miltiades (who defeated the Persians at Marathon), and Timoleon (who purged Sicily of tyranny and replaced the tyrant's fortress with a court of justice).⁶⁸ He did not hesitate to include examples of Greeks who fought and defeated fellow Greeks, such as Phocion, who commanded the Athenian left wing in the victory over Sparta in the Battle of Naxos (376 BC).

Unlike Trapezuntius' pantheon of Greek heroes (which had a moral and religious basis), Gemisto's list of heroes in his poem is purely patriotic and includes military and political heroes exclusively. It is also more restricted in time than the Greek pantheon in Trapezuntius' *Comparatio*. Gemisto's catalogue ends in the second century BC with Philopoemen. This is hardly a

65 Berlinghieri's poem is discussed most extensively by Roberts (2013), who places it in its artistic, intellectual, and political contexts. Unlike Gemisto, Berlinghieri also explicitly referred to his own time, even if sparingly. When he mentioned Constantinople, for instance, he recalled John Argyropoulos (Berlinghieri 1967 = 1482: fol. ggiii^r).

66 See Gemisto (1516: fol. Cii^r, l. 30; Cii^r, l. 23).

67 Obviously, some heroes are connected both with the story of the Argonauts and/or the Calydonian Hunt and with the story of Troy.

68 On Codrus, see Pherec., *FGrH* 3 F. 154; Hellanic., *FGrH* 4 F. 125; Lycurg. *Leoc.* 84–86; Pl. *Symp.* 208d. On Miltiades see Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 7.3.1; Hdt. 6.39–40, 136–40; Nep. *Milt.* On Timoleon, see Plut. *Tim.*; Nep. *Tim.*; Diod. Sic. 15.66–8, 16.65.2–9.

coincidence, as he was praised as “the last of the Hellenes” and the last champion of liberty in Pausanias and Plutarch.⁶⁹ While Trapezuntius created a sense of continuity from “prisca Graecia” up to the fifteenth century, Gemisto created another impression of contiguity: ancient Hellenes and contemporary Greeks are placed side by side as if nothing happened in the huge interval between them. For instance, Gemisto related himself directly to the ancient past, when he referred to Asclepius’ sons Podalirius and Machaon as his “kinsmen” from Epidaurus and so suggested a direct, unmediated triangular relationship between himself, his mythical ancestors, and their shared territory.⁷⁰

In his list of national heroes, Gemisto did not include Roman or Byzantine heroes. Roman heroes such as Scipio Africanus and Aemilius Paullus with whom the Byzantine elite had identified in the past are absent from Gemisto’s catalogue.⁷¹ He also omitted distinctively Byzantine heroes: Emperor Michael VIII Palaeologus, for example, who in 1261 won back the empire for the Greeks after Latin rule, goes unmentioned. In the context of Solon and Lycurgus, the ancient lawgivers, there is no reference to Gemisto’s possible grandfather Gemistos Plethon. This is also true for earlier Byzantine legislative heroes such as Justinian I, whose laws were to provide the basis of those of the semi-independent Greek community in the Maremma area near Siena in the 1470s (see Chapter 3, pp. 112–13). The only exception to editing out the Byzantine or Roman ‘interval’ between ancient and contemporary Greeks is Gemisto’s elaborate *ekphrasis* of the splendid architecture of the Hagia Sophia in the first chapter of his poem.⁷² Even this Roman monument is completely ‘Hellenised’. For Gemisto, the building stood as a “memorable temple...that Greece (*Graecia*) had once erected”.⁷³ The poet thus transformed the church into a national Greek monument that expressed the historic piety and devotion of the Greeks rather than the power of the Roman emperor who actually erected it.

69 Paus. 8.52.6; Plut. *Phil.* 1.7 (but compare *Arat.* 24.2).

70 Gemisto (1516: fol. Ci^v, ll. 29–30).

71 Kaldellis (2007: 89).

72 Gemisto (1516: fols. Bii^r–Biii^v).

73 “magnum et memorabile templum...quod Graecia quondam...condidit” (Gemisto 1516: fol. Bii^r, ll. 19–20). Elsewhere, Gemisto also mentions the Hagia Sophia: “Hoc tam sydereum templum et penetrale Sophiae | Immanes Turcae latebras Machmetis iniqui | Nunc faciunt, retinent suam sine nomine moscheam. | Atque ubi Christicolae precibusque et thure solebant | Carminibusque piis dominum placare triforem, | Obsequium nunc Turca ferox cultumque profanum | Machmeti praestat misero dominumque fatetur” (fol. Biii^v, ll. 3–13).

The order in which Gemisto presented the Greek places and peoples in his list also differs from what we find in Pliny. Pliny the Elder had followed the Greek *periplus* literature as a structural framework for his geographical descriptions and created something of a travelogue describing the coastline of a particular area, its major bays and notable places together with the distances between them.⁷⁴ Pliny's account of the territory that Gemisto regarded as Greece starts off with Epirus and finally rounds off with an epilogue on the islands off the coast of Greece. In his account, "Graecia" is only a small, neatly defined part of the region under discussion and not an encompassing entity. Gemisto, on the other hand, starts off his enumeration of places and peoples under the heading of "Graecia" with Byzantium, followed by the Peloponnesus, Attica and Athens and the adjacent regions of Phocis and Boeotia, the islands in the Ionian, Aegean, and Mediterranean Seas, Thessaly, Macedonia, and rounds off with Epirus. Of course, the order of the names of *individual* places, rivers, mountains, and tribes had to be adjusted to the metre of the poem, but there is no *a priori* reason why the poet would transpose clusters of place names belonging to the same region. That his reorganisation is in some way significant also appears from the fact that elsewhere, Gemisto did follow Pliny's example. In his catalogue of Indian place names in the sixth chapter of the poem, for example, he adopted the order in Pliny's account.⁷⁵

The organisation of regions in Gemisto's poems roughly follows their current political and cultural relevance. As Constantinople remained the political and cultural capital of Byzantium, it is easy to see why Gemisto's list starts off with that city. Both political and cultural significance also explain the prominent role of the Peloponnesus in Gemisto's catalogue. Together with Constantinople, the Despotate of the Morea had been the main political and cultural backbone of the Byzantine Empire in the decades immediately before its final dissolution (see Map 4). Ruled by close relatives of the emperor in Constantinople, the Morea was a centre of cultural development in the last centuries of the Empire's existence, and outlived the capital by at least seven years.⁷⁶ Humanists generally admired the Peloponnesus, with Sparta, as the noblest part of Greece. Cyriac of Ancona, for example, particularly praised "the noble-spirited, renowned race of Spartans".⁷⁷ In his appeal to Frederick III, Michael Apostoles also called the Peloponnesus the most delightful part

74 Doody (2010: 65–66). For a more extensive discussion of Pliny's description of the Greek lands, see Detlefsen (1909: 48–62; 1908: 80–86).

75 Compare the enumeration in Gemisto (1516: fols. Hi^v, l. 18–Hiii^r, l. 8) with Plin. *NH* 6.67–79.

76 Runciman (2009).

77 Cyriac (ed. Bodnar 2003: esp. 329–35).

of the world (“ὀφθαλμὸν οἰκουμένης”),⁷⁸ while Demetrios Moschos stressed the strategic location of Sparta and Corinth.⁷⁹ As we have seen in Chapter 1, for Gemistos Plethon, one of Cyriac’s prominent hosts during his travels,⁸⁰ the Peloponnesus had been the heartland of the Hellenes. Although it is impossible to say whether Gemisto had intimate knowledge of Plethon’s work, there is a general but clearly noticeable overlap between Plethon’s vision of the Greek heartland and Gemisto’s image of Greece, produced almost a century later. As we have seen, Plethon had claimed that there was no country more appropriate for the Hellenes than the Peloponnesus together with “the areas of Europe bordering upon it as well as the islands off its coast”.⁸¹ The European regions closest to the Peloponnesus are Attica and Boeotia—and places from these regions are indeed grouped together by Gemisto immediately after the Peloponnesus and just before he summed up the Ionian and Aegean islands. Although Plethon’s definition is fairly vague and leaves implicit what regions and islands he has in mind, the areas Gemisto represented as the most important ones roughly correspond to Plethon’s conception of the Hellenic heartland. As part of his re-historicisation of Greece, Gemisto thus grouped together the regions of Greece around the cultural and political centres of the Byzantine Empire: the city of Constantinople and the Peloponnesus.

“Florentissima Europae pars”: European Greece

Apart from carving out a distinctive position for Greece on the European ethno-cultural map, Gemisto also tried to connect his country and its inhabitants with other European countries. He generally represented the European Greeks in sharp contrast to the “peoples of Asia”, but also forged links between Greeks and individual European peoples and tribes.⁸² In the catalogue of Iberian auxiliaries, for instance, Gemisto mentioned the “Gravians” who were, in his view, “related to the Greeks by blood” (“cognati sanguine Graiis”). The idea that the Gravians were a Greek people was derived from Pliny the Elder and Silius Italicus. Pliny mentions them together with the Bracae, Helleni, and Tyde (or Tuy, in Iberian Galicia), “all people of Greek stock”.⁸³ According to

78 M. Apostoles (ed. Laourdas 1953: 521, l. 87).

79 Stefec (2010b: 360).

80 Cyriac (ed. Bodnar 2003: 328, §55).

81 See the Greek text, quoted and translated in Chapter 1, p. 38, n. 35.

82 See Gemisto (1516: fols. Gii^r, l. 5–Giii^r, l. 10).

83 Plin. *NH* 4.20. Modern editors prefer to read “Grovi” instead of “Gravi”.

Silius, moreover, the very name *Gravii* was a perverted form of *Graii* (Greeks).⁸⁴ Importantly, in Gemisto's poem, the identification of the Gravians with the ancient Greeks results in their having a special commitment to the liberation of Greece. The poet predicts that the Gravians (whoever they may be in the sixteenth-century context) would be eager to protect their ancient Penates and to put an end to the dishonour of their ancestors.⁸⁵ Exactly the same idea is applied to the inhabitants of Marseilles, commonly regarded as a Greek colony, and even a bastion of Hellenism, in the ancient sources.⁸⁶ Summing up the auxiliaries of the king of France, Gemisto claimed that the "Massilienses" were particularly willing to come to the aid of their former fatherland ("patriae priscae") and to take revenge for their ancestors ("ulciscique suos . . . parentes").⁸⁷ His strategy of 'ethnic linking' recalls the notion of *consanguinitas* that Ianus Lascaris used, with wider implications, in his Florentine oration (discussed in Chapter 5).⁸⁸

Gemisto's tendency to present the Greeks as intimately connected with the Europeans is also reflected in his complete exclusion of the Anatolian shores from his image of Greece. In view of the obviously important role of Asia Minor in ancient Greek myth and history, this is a notable omission. Apart from the fact that Asia Minor was sometimes regarded as a rapidly de-Hellenising region,⁸⁹ Gemisto's exclusion of Asia Minor seems to be rooted in the generic conventions and rhetorical logic of humanist crusade appeals. In anti-Turkish discourse, the opposition between Christians and non-Christians, as well as

84 Sil. *Pun.* 3.366. In Renaissance scholarship, Plin. 4.20 and Sil. 3.366 were discussed together (cf. Muecke and Dunston 1998: 53).

85 "At Gravii quondam cognati sanguine Graiis | Exultant properantque suis coniungere dextas | Patribus et bello veteres pugnare penates | Sanguine barbarico ferroque abolere parentum | Dedecus et rabidos armis prosternere Turcas" (Gemisto 1516: fol. Diir, ll. 25–29). The manuscript of the Biblioteca Laurenziana gives "fratribus" instead of "patribus" (BML, Plut. 34.57, fol. 25r, l. 14).

86 The ancient sources for this founding myth are gathered and discussed by Lomas (2004: 479).

87 "Graiiugenumque etiam generati Massilienses | Progenie properant patriae succurrere priscae | Vliscisque suos belloque armisque parentes" (Gemisto 1516: fol. Diir, ll. 5–7). The ancient sources specify that Marseilles (Massalia) was founded by Phocaeans: their "patria" was Phocaea on the Western coast of Anatolia rather than Gemisto's "Graecia".

88 Gemisto also reminds his readers of the Greek background of the Grand Prince of Moscow Vasily III Ivanovitch (cf. fol. Fiiir, ll. 11–12) as his mother, Zoë (later Sophia) Palaeologina, was the niece of the last Byzantine Emperor Constantine XI Palaeologus, but this is a form of dynastic rather than ethnic linking.

89 Nuti (2012: 122).

between civilisation and barbarity, had a highly schematised territorial basis: Europe was presented as Christian and civilised, while Asia and Africa were dominated by barbarism and irreligion. As Gemisto wanted to present Greece as a civilised and Christian country, it was an obvious choice, according to this representational logic, to exclude Asian regions. Apart from historical and rhetorical factors, pragmatic motives, too, might have played a role in Gemisto's representation of the Greek world, since he might well have considered the inclusion of the Anatolian coast into the territory of "Graecia" to be unrealistic or over-ambitious.

As Gemisto wrote his *Protrepticon et ponosticon* in order to encourage Pope Leo x to liberate his country, he represented Greece as worthy of the pope's special attention and support. To set free the land of the ancient Greeks could be an integral part of a holy war administered by a humanist-Christian pope who had himself called Greece "the most eminent part of Europe" ("florentissima Europae pars").⁹⁰ Gemisto presented the pope with a vision in which he would liberate, in one single project, the places associated with Greek antiquity and the sacred sites associated with the birth, ministry, crucifixion, and resurrection of Christ. Apart from the emphatic *ekphrasis* of the Hagia Sophia, presented as a sign of Greek piety, the poet repeatedly stressed that the Greek renegades under Ottoman rule had not forgotten their original religion. Refuting the negative perception of the Greeks by men like Giustiniani and Quirini (see above, pp. 237–38), Gemisto insisted that the Greeks had always preserved the memory of "the faith of their parents", which moved them towards action against the Turks. According to the poet, they would embrace the pope *en masse*, joining his army of "devout Christians" and following him as their "lord and father".⁹¹ Although Gemisto more than once calls to mind ancient temples and cultic places in his evocation of Greece, in order to bring out the area's antiquity, he is unambiguous about the profound (Christian) religiosity of the modern Greeks.

Throughout his poem, Gemisto exploited the pope's philhellenism to the fullest. He not only presented Leo x as a Christian saviour but also placed the pope on par with the heroes of ancient Greek history in the catalogue of Greek heroes. After mentioning over ninety heroes no longer capable of safeguarding "Graecia", Gemisto introduced Leo x as her liberator. "Here is the man", he stated, "the man who will defeat the raving Turks and the

90 In a letter to Cardinal Wolsey and Campeggio (20 August 1518), cited in Charrière (1848: 73–74).

91 Gemisto (1516: fols. E1^r, l. 29–E11^r, l. 13). A similar idea is expressed by Lascaris in his speech to Charles v (see the edition by Nikas 1995: 53–65).

ferocious peoples through his determination and warfare, and who will put them, finally beaten, to flight”.⁹² By introducing the pope to Greece as “the revenger of your blood”, Gemisto included him, proleptically, among the famous heroes of Greek history.

The Politicisation of Greece: The Greek Monarchy

Although Laonikos Chalkokondyles had hoped for a Greek kingdom (see Chapter 1, p. 48), and Bessarion had worked towards a form of Greek autonomy near Siena (see Chapter 3, pp. 112–13), Greeks had generally not even voiced a vision of a Greek state in their crusade appeals. Gemisto not only conceptualised Greece in terms of a historical territory but also imagined it as a future body politic. Historically speaking, the country Gemisto imagined was unprecedented as a continuous political territory, even if he pretended that it corresponded to a lost kingdom. As a historical political entity, in the Roman period, “Graecia” had referred to the area of the freed city states from the Peloponnesus to Epirus and Thessaly.⁹³ Within the administrative context of the Byzantine Empire, Hellas existed, from the end of the seventh century, as a province or *theme*, whose extent seems to have varied over time, but which existed next to themes such as Thrace, the Peloponnesus, and Macedonia.⁹⁴ In the last two centuries of the empire’s existence, the region of modern Greece, together with Constantinople and its Thracian hinterlands, consisted of a patchwork of independent and semi-independent seigneuries that did not represent a coherent political unity under the flag of “Hellas” or “Graecia” (see Map 4).

An elucidating document, dating from 1437, offers an anonymous Latin description of the “present-day lands of the Greeks” (“terrae hodiernae Graecorum”). The author divided the lands of the Greeks into “dominia secularia” and “dominia spiritualia”, referring, respectively, to the dominions of the emperor and those of the patriarch.⁹⁵ While the former are modest (Constantinople, the Peloponnesus, and a handful of islands), the latter are

92 “Hic est ille, tui fusi iam sanguinis ultor; | Graecia, qui rabidos Turcas populosque feroces | Consilio et bello vincet victosque fugabit” (Gemisto 1516: fol. Ciii^v, ll. 10–11).

93 GAH s.v. “Graecia”.

94 ODB s.v. “Hellas”, s.v. “Greece”. On Hellas in the sources of the seventh to the eighth centuries, see Charanis (1955).

95 Anon. (ed. Lambros 1910). The text is preserved in BSB, Cod. Lat. 18.298. George Trapezuntius (ed. Monfasani 1984m: 438, §16; 439, §19) had “Graecia” to refer both to

more extensive and also include territories ruled by non-Greeks, such as the Florentine Duchy of Athens and parts of Russia. The author went into detail as to the numbers of villages and cities in each region. Such a nuanced and differentiated description of the “*terrae hodiernae Graecorum*” is, however, exceptional, and Gemisto’s Greek monarchy corresponds to the former “*dominia secularia*” of the emperor only in very rough outlines (it is instructive to compare Map 1 and Map 4 here). If we want to find a period in Byzantine history in which the extent of the empire more or less corresponded with Gemisto’s Greek state, the years after the Battle of Manzikert (1071) are relatively apt (see Map 3). As this battle was generally regarded as a decisive blow to the Byzantine Empire,⁹⁶ however, there is no reason to assume that Gemisto had this specific period in mind. As we have seen, he was more interested in evoking the cultural and military triumphs of ancient Greece.

In Gemisto’s poem, there is a tension between the notion of a liberated and more or less self-sufficient Greece and the idea of papal universalism that pervades the entire poem. After prophesying the conquest of Asia and Africa, Gemisto also foretells the recapture of the Holy Land. According to his prophecy, the pope will fortify the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, found a city and name it after himself, and erect a monument before eventually returning to Rome in triumph.⁹⁷ As he prophesies the establishment of the *imperium Christianum*, Gemisto at the same time acknowledges the special position of the Greek people. The re-establishment of a form of self-rule for the “*Graiuigenae*” is specifically singled out as one of the pope’s major achievements in an inscription the poet imagines to be attached to a huge monument in honour of Leo X and his crusade:

Hic Leo magnanimus Thusca de stirpe creatus,
 Antistes Decimus perpetuusque dei,
 Devicit populos Asiae Libiaequae feroces
 Vtque vides, propria sub ditione tenet
 Atque sibi totum vigilando subdidit orbem
 Graiugenisque vetus reddidit imperium.⁹⁸

the *dominia spiritualia* and to the *dominia secularia* in his speech to Pope Nicholas v. Cf. Trapezuntius (ed. Monfasani 1984i: 357, §§26–27 and 1984n: 452, §23).

96 See, for instance, Norwich (1999: 232–44).

97 Gemisto (1516: fols. Gii^v, l. 5–Hii^v, l. 8; Hiii^r, l. 4–Hiii^v, l. 10; Hii^v, l. 9–Hiii^r, l. 3; Hiii^v, l. 11–Hiv^r, l. 23; li^v, ll. 17–29; li^r, l. 16–li^v, l. 17).

98 Gemisto (1516: fol. li^v, ll. 6–11).

Here, Leo the Magnanimous, from Tuscan stock, the tenth [of that name] and universal high-priest of God, defeated the ferocious peoples of Asia and Libya and brought them, as you see, under his jurisdiction; by his vigilance he subdued the whole world and gave back to the Greeks their ancient power.

After Byzantium had handed over to Leo x “the diadem of its empire and its ancient power as well as the reins over the entire race of the Greeks” (see pp. 239–40 above), the pope eventually restores it to Greece. In Gemisto’s vision, Leo x would make arrangements for the government of the country, establishing both “holy laws” (“leges sanctae”) and “public rights” (“publica iura”), even though the pope would not himself rule over the Greeks but transfer “the ancient diadem of the Greek Empire” to his brother who will thus become “monarch” (“monarcha”).⁹⁹ This monarch would then rule over the regions encompassed by the Ionian, Aegean, and Black Seas, which means, in Gemisto’s own words, over the entire Greek people (“totum genus Graecorum”). After the pope’s triumphal entry into Constantinople, he will moreover restore a “*pontifex magnus dominus* whom we call patriarch” presiding over religious matters, governing the clergy, taking care of Christian souls, and restoring to their ancient honour the ruined and desecrated churches.¹⁰⁰ In this way, Gemisto reconciled the seemingly conflicting ideals of Greek liberation and self-rule on the one hand and papal world supremacy on the other. Michael Apostoles had proposed a strikingly similar plan in a different context. In his Greek address to Emperor Frederick III, he advised the transfer of “the kingdom of Byzantium” to the emperor’s son Maximilian, so that the dispersed Hellenes would regain their fatherland.¹⁰¹

Geographically or territorially speaking, Gemisto presented his liberated fatherland as the restoration of ancient Greece. The “*vetus imperium*” of the

99 Gemisto (1516: fol. Fir, l. 16–Fiv, l. 2). Reference is to either Giuliano de’ Medici (suggested in Manoussakas 1965: 38, n. 83) or the pope’s half-brother and right-hand man Giulio di Giuliano de’ Medici, the future Pope Clement VII.

100 Gemisto (1516: fol. Gii^r, l. 24–Gii^v, l. 4).

101 “Δεῖξον ἡμῖν βασιλεία τοῦ Βυζαντίου Μαξιμιανόν τὸν πανευτυχέστατον, ὃς σου τὴν βασιλείαν ἐπὶ γήρᾳ βαθεῖ ἀντιδέξεται. Ἀπόδος τὸ πανταχοῦ γῆς διεσπαρμένον γένος ἡμῶν τῇ πατρίδι, τὸ ποτὲ μὲν ὑψηλότατον καὶ σοφώτατον, νῦν δ’ ἐξουθενημένον καὶ ταπεινότατον” [*Please offer us as king of Byzantium the universally most successful Maximilian, who shall receive in return your kingdom at your advanced age. Restore our people, living scattered all around this earth, once the loftiest and wisest of all, now despised and humbled, to its fatherland*] (M. Apostoles, ed. Laourdas 1953: 522–23, ll. 147–49). I printed “ἀντιδέξεται” instead of Laourdas’ “ἀνταδέξεται”. Cf. Binner (1980: 190–96, 237–38).

Greeks that Leo x would restore, on the other hand, evokes the Roman imperial tradition of Byzantium rather than ancient Greece. Addressing “Graecia” in the second chapter of the poem, Gemisto claims that Pope Leo x will restore not only the ancient diadem, but also her “imperium ingens orbis sine fine”:

Et tibi restituet sacrum diadema vetustum
 Imperiumque ingens orbis sine fine tuosque
 Libertate frui populos et pace perenni
 Instituet legesque dabit legumque ministros.¹⁰²

[This is also the man] who will give back to you both your sacred ancient diadem and an immense power over the world without end. He will make sure that your peoples will enjoy liberty and perennial peace and he will give you laws and ministers to safeguard them.

The diadem is the imperial symbol par excellence,¹⁰³ and the phrasing “imperium ingens orbis sine fine” is strongly reminiscent of Vergil’s *Aeneid*, where Jupiter promises Venus that he will not set limits in space or time to the Romans but give them instead an “empire without end” (“imperium sine fine”).¹⁰⁴ The fact that Gemisto reused the Vergilian phrase here is notable since the lines seem to imply that the pope would restore to Greece the lost imperial authority of Rome. Perhaps Gemisto hoped that Leo x would eventually transfer the *imperium Romanum* back to the Greeks or would renew the *divisio imperii* between East and West with two emperors (rumours had it that Leo x had promised to make Francis I ‘Emperor of Constantinople’).¹⁰⁵ In any case, the allusion to the Roman myth is difficult to explain consistently in the context of a Greek kingdom, and Gemisto refers to the envisaged ruler of the Greeks as *monarcha* instead of *imperator*.¹⁰⁶ Therefore, we should perhaps not put too much practical weight on the imperial implications of the Vergilian line. When he referred to the fall of Constantinople, George Trapezuntius had also called

102 Gemisto (1516: fol. Ciii^v, ll. 13–16).

103 The Hellenistic symbol of the diadem was introduced by Constantine I, and its evolution affected the development of crowns until the twelfth century (*ODB* s.v. “crown”).

104 Compare Gemisto (1516: fol. Ciii^v, ll. 13–14) with Verg. *Aen.* 2.278–79 (“His ego nec metas rerum nec tempora pono; | Imperium sine fine dedi”).

105 See the report of Cornelius de Fine, cited in Setton (1984: 162).

106 Gemisto’s use of “monarcha” (perhaps inspired by its Greek origin) is notable and suggests that the poet wanted to keep the precise status of the ruler of the Greeks tactically vague in anticipation of the actual outcome of the arrangements after the desired crusade. On Gemisto’s use of the term in this context, see Lamers (2014c: 119–20).

the city “sedes imperii translata in Graeciam” (see p. 162, n. 106), and Gemisto’s addressee Leo x had referred to the city as the former seat of Constantine the Great and many other Roman emperors in his encyclical letter of 3 September 1513, cited above. In any case, the Vergilian notion of eternal Roman power was a subtle reminder of the distinguished position of Greece as “the rivalling peer of the Roman Empire”.¹⁰⁷ In this way, Gemisto’s association of Greece with its former *imperium* helped to add prestige to a country that the pope’s brother would rule.¹⁰⁸ While references to protagonists of ancient Greek myth and history served to forge a relationship between ancient Greece and Gemisto’s fatherland, allusions to the imperial tradition of Constantinople transformed Greece from a historically united realm into a political territory with an eminent imperial tradition.

Although Laonikos Chalkokondyles had hoped for a Hellenic king to reunite all Hellenes in one Greek kingdom, Gemisto recognised the possibility of Greek freedom under Latin rule. They wrote in different contexts. Unlike Laonikos, Gemisto addressed a Latin audience in an attempt to win it over to a crusade against the Turks. As he accommodated the concerns of his audience, we cannot take his views on the political future of Greece at face value. In any case, Gemisto did not imagine Greece as part of the new papal *oikoumene* in contrast to the other conquered territories of Asia and Africa, which, it seems, are subsumed under direct papal jurisdiction (“sub dicione” in Gemisto’s words). Although the poet left unsaid whether or not the Greeks would be involved in the political organisation of the Greek kingdom, any reader of his poem is left with an awareness of Greece as a territorially defined and politically unified region within the boundaries of Europe.

107 Phrase taken from Ugonio (1559: fol. 16^v), where, in a dialogue between Greece and Italy regarding their respective misfortunes, the former refers to herself as the “mater liberalium disciplinarum et alumna virtutis domiciliumque libertatis atque aemula Romani imperii” (“the mother of the liberal arts and the disciple of virtue, the abode of freedom, and the rivalling colleague of the Roman Empire”). Note that in Sall. *Cat.* 10, the very similar phrase “aemula imperii Romani” is applied to Rome’s archenemy Carthage.

108 Perhaps Gemisto had in mind Aristotle’s idea that the Greeks could rule the world if they were united in a single state (Arist. *Pol.* 7.7 1327b30–3). The Vergilian subtext is ambiguous enough to signify that by creating a Greek kingdom the pope does not so much restore a universal empire ruled by the Greeks as he gives back to them the endless power or influence of Greece over the world. E.H. Kantorowicz (1957: 397) observes that the meaning of the term *imperium* had begun to shift in the direction of *dignitas* in the sixteenth century. So, we are left with the possibility that through the installation of a monarch over Greece, the country is imagined as regaining its *dignitas* in the world.

The *Protrepicon et pronosticon* has been criticised as an ivory-tower construct that must be praised as a literary and intellectual rather than a political achievement.¹⁰⁹ The above analysis has shown, however, that the poem was not an expression of otherworldly nostalgia but a rather timely political message carefully designed to appeal to its audience. Gemisto's poem is also emblematic for the way in which Byzantine Greeks in the diaspora negotiated between 'here' and 'there', between host society and homeland. While Gemisto presented Greece through a Latin lens, he also introduced the liberation of his fatherland into humanist crusade rhetoric. Instead of harking back to a lost homeland, he shaped a new one that had never existed before, even though he presented it as if the country he described had an age-old history that had been interrupted by the advent of the Ottoman Turks. He projected a well-defined political territory upon the rather vague cultural notion of Greece that had not yet found its articulation where we would most expect it: on maps. In this way, the poet transformed his "Graecia" from a rather abstract 'province of Western thought' into a true country on the European map. With his poem he also tacitly guided the memory of Byzantium by transforming the Byzantine Empire into an imaginary Greece. At the turn of the century, Gemisto thus created an imaginary home for the Hellenes whom the Byzantine intelligentsia in Italy had introduced to the stage. In creating his image of his homeland, he addressed questions that would resurface in the eighteenth and nineteenth century when Greek nationalists turned to the West for support and had to be specific about what country they wanted it to liberate. The problems of territoriality Gemisto confronted thus anticipate later, fiercer debates over the territorial integrity of Hellas.

109 Binner (1980: 207–16).

Conclusion: Greece Reinvented

In his *Apology of an Anti-Hellene*, the Greek critic Nikos Dimou writes that, if any Western import has harmed Greece, it has been the idea of continuity of Hellenic civilisation. “Out of the blue”, he continues, “the Western ‘Philhellenes’ (and their mimics, our own ‘scholars’) stuck a helmet on their head, dubbed them keepers of the ancient flame, and injected them with a passion for purity.”¹ According to him, the modern Greeks thus appropriated essentially Western ideas and fantasies about Greece to serve as the backbone of ‘their’ Greek tradition. The continuous efforts of the Byzantine intelligentsia in Italy to restore continuity with ancient Greece sheds new light on the origin and implications of the notion of cultural continuity in Hellenism. It shows that the one-sidedly classicist appropriation of the Greek world cannot be traced back to modern philhellenism alone and has deeper historical and cultural roots. Although Romantic philhellenism largely shaped Western notions of Greece and the Greeks, the classicism of most Italian humanists shaped the classicist lens through which the West continued—and to some degree, *continues*—to regard the Greek world. The previous chapters suggest that, in the nineteenth century, the philhellenic imposition of Greekness did not come “out of the blue”. They show that the Byzantine intelligentsia reified the idea that the Romans of the East actually were Greeks, accelerating a process of transformation that had already started in the final years of Byzantium. This process of transformation did not simply rely on the mindless import of Western templates and models, but instead resulted from a more complex situation of cultural negotiation between Greeks and Latins about what it meant to be a *Graecus*.

Along these and similar lines, the previous chapters prompt some further general conclusions, organised in three pairs of contrasting terms that run through the previous chapters: disownment versus appropriation, assimilation versus distinctiveness, and unity versus diversity. Under the headings of these contrasting pairs, these final pages resume and address some of the issues raised in the first pages of this study, namely how and why the Byzantine intelligentsia in Italy identified with the ancient Hellenes. By relating these

1 Dimou's *Apology of an Anti-Hellene* was published in Greek in 1997. An English translation is available on the website of the author (<www.ndimou.gr/en/apology>). For a historical account of the transition from Western to ‘indigenous’ Hellenism see esp. Hamilakis (2007: 57–123).

outcomes to the scholarly contexts in which Byzantine scholars have traditionally been studied, they also briefly explain how this study bears upon our understanding of the relationship between Latin humanism and Greekness, the Byzantines' role in the humanist movement, and the common ways of thinking about 'Greek identity' in the interval between the decline and fall of Byzantium and the emergence of the nation state Hellas.

Disownment and Appropriation: Romans Becoming Greeks

In the footsteps of Plethon, and just like Laonikos Chalkokondyles, the Byzantine intelligentsia in Italy made the shift from traditional Hellenism towards Greekness, or from the literary and rhetorical study and imitation of ancient Greek literature to the ethno-cultural identification with the ancient Hellenes collectively as a people. The impression of continuity with ancient Greece was crucial for the construction of Greekness. The previous chapters showed the different ways in which this sense of continuity was achieved and how it overcame the rupture with the ancient Hellenes. The most important origins of rupture that the Byzantine intelligentsia also noted were the impact of Roman culture on indigenous Hellenic traditions in the remote past and, especially, the impact of the fall of Constantinople in their own time. They understood the impact of Roman civilisation in terms of cultural and linguistic alienation from what they perceived as original and native. On the other hand, they saw the fall of their capital not only as the ruination of their fatherland, but also of the ancient Greek tradition and what it constituted: European civilisation at large.

The Byzantine intelligentsia in Italy bridged the gap with the ancient Hellenes by creating various forms of quasi-contiguity with the ancient Greek past. They had various strategies at their disposal. First of all, they appropriated the ancient Greek past via the language they used (if they wrote in Greek) as well as via the names they applied to themselves. The fact that they called themselves Greeks was in itself a means of bridging the gap with the ancient Hellenes, especially in Greek, where the word "Ἕλληνες distinguished the ancients from Γραικοί and Ῥωμαῖοι. Yet their Hellenism was hardly a matter of linguistic usage or naming practice alone. In this, it differed from the Hellenism of the majority of Byzantine intellectuals before the fifteenth century. In addition to naming, the most explicit strategies to secure their connection with ancient Greece were ethnic anchoring (which rooted their history in the remote and venerable past) as well as their claim to cultural preservation and imitation (which secured a sense of sameness over time). Sometimes they

explicated a relation of ethnic kinship that created the impression of historical continuity with the ancient past (as did, e.g. Cardinal Bessarion, discussed in Chapter 3); sometimes they suggested such a relation by using the vocabulary of familial relations and kinship (as did, e.g. Nikolaos Sekoundinos in his letter to Andronikos Kallistos, discussed in Chapter 2, pp. 82–83). Cultural preservation was not only dependent upon the imitation of the language of the ancient Greeks, the collection and reproduction of manuscripts, or the editing of Greek classics. It also hinged upon the imitation of supposedly ancient ideals such as Hellenic freedom (as in the case of Cardinal Bessarion, discussed in Chapter 3), Spartan militarism and Orphic wisdom (as in the case of Michele Marullo, discussed in Chapter 6), or the guardianship of ‘Aristotelian’ orthodoxy (as in the case of George Trapezuntius, discussed in Chapter 4).

Although they did not write full-blown histories of the Greeks, the Byzantine expatriates did construct smaller narratives of Greek history in which they could position themselves and their fellow Greeks. Such small, *ad hoc* narratives helped them to connect themselves in the present with their Hellenic ancestors in the past. Cardinal Bessarion, for example, reduced the script of Greek history to a continuous battle against slavery and barbarism and the maintenance of various, but especially spiritual, forms of freedom. As we have seen in Chapter 3, this was not only an occasional encomiastic theme in his *Encomium to Trebizond*. The motif of Hellenic freedom resurfaced in other works and, more importantly, gave ideological substance to his endeavours to maintain not only the physical and political, but also the spiritual freedom of the Greek people. His view on the Greek past as a continuous battle for freedom also enabled him to define his own role in the Greek tradition. He himself did not simply represent but rather *embodied* the ancient Greek past by his claim to imitate and replicate it.

From very different perspectives, George Trapezuntius and Ianus Lascaris also constructed interpretations of the ancient Greek past that glued past and present together and in which they could position themselves. While Ianus Lascaris moulded his view on Greek history on the ancient theme of Greek colonisation and domestication of the world, Trapezuntius held more philosophic or prophetic views on the role of the Greeks—and of himself—in history (see Chapters 4 and 5). All these representations of the Greek past were *ad hoc* in the sense that they were the products of the specific contexts in which they were constructed. Ianus Lascaris’ focus on the dissemination of Greek civilisation, for instance, underpinned his argument that the Italians should support and favour those who taught them. It also tacitly provided a suitable background for his own activities, for it placed his own position as an expatriate professor of Greek in a respectable Greek tradition.

The Byzantines' claims to continuity with the ancient Greeks must not obscure the ways Byzantines adapted the Greek tradition to their new circumstances and concerns. Bessarion, for example, did not so much 'imitate' a pre-existing notion of Athenian ἐλευθερία but rather infused an old word with new meanings. Michele Marullo, moreover, created his own version of the Greek pantheon, which he presented as "patria sacra". Similarly, in their representations of the ancient Greek past, the Byzantine intelligentsia in Italy could combine or lump together elements of the Greek tradition that had previously been unrelated. This is particularly clear in Giovanni Gemisto's pioneering representation of Greece. In his poem to Leo x, he suggested that in the ancient past, there had existed a country called Greece that had eventually been lost in 1453. To give substance to this imagined fatherland, he lumped together events and figures from the ancient Greek past and tied these to a specific territory he labelled "Graecia". In his representation, the Calydonian hunters and the Argonauts would come to save the Hagia Sophia together with Themistocles and Pericles—a curious conjunction of pasts which makes Gemisto's representation of Greece a particularly complex site of memory (Chapter 7).

The Byzantines in Italy did not theorise in any depth about the historical relationship between themselves, the Hellenes and the Romans, a problem that would eventually only be solved in nineteenth-century Greek historiography. They occasionally represented the Romans as a foreign occupier (Theodore Gazes in Chapter 1, pp. 58–61), a foreign but good-natured people whose rule the Hellenes had always supported (Bessarion in Chapter 3, pp. 101–03, 107–09), or as an originally Greek and therefore consanguineous "genus" (Ianus Lascaris in Chapter 5, 173–85). They regarded those whom we now call Byzantines as Hellenes who had guarded the *imperium Romanum* and had even adopted Roman features, especially in their language and institutions. Unlike Manuel Chrysoloras, they did not maintain that they were Greco-Romans, but rather denied that they were Romans at all. The idea that their *Greek* instead of *Roman* ancestors had held the Roman Empire was, from a traditional Byzantine perspective, a fundamentally Western point of view (even though in the West the Roman legacy of the Greeks in the East was contested).

The Greek identifier enabled the Byzantine intelligentsia in Italy to retain something of positive distinctiveness and a sense of coherence now that they had lost their empire and were prey to political fragmentation and cultural assimilation. Even so, to properly understand their rejection of Roman Byzantium, we must not see their self-representation as Hellenes in Italy outside the context of what Richard Jenkins called the external moment of identification, i.e. the way the dominant Italian target-audience identified and evaluated the Byzantines (see the Introduction, p. 23). The Latins welcomed

the Byzantines in Italy as Greeks and not as Romans. From the ninth century onwards, Westerners had called the Byzantines Greeks, long before the *Graeci* themselves would eventually adopt Greekness in the fifteenth century (see esp. Chapter 2, pp. 64–72). While Byzantine Greekness was a radical innovation in Byzantium, it was the normal way to frame the Byzantines in the West. This virtually forced the Byzantine intelligentsia in Italy to adopt the Greek label that the Latins assigned to them, at least if they did not want to unsettle the traditional ethnographical templates of their hosts.

Importantly, the Greekness of the Byzantine intelligentsia in Italy was largely secular in that it was a principally ethno-cultural sense of belonging independent of belief. True, some Byzantine Greeks developed the notion that the Greeks had a divine mission. Ianus Lascaris argued that God had given civilisation to the Greeks, who had then disseminated it all over the world (see Chapter 5, pp. 185–90). From a very different perspective, George Trapezuntius saw a privileged role for the Greeks in providential history (see Chapter 4, esp. pp. 149–61). Notwithstanding the sacralisation of the Greeks, as an ethno-cultural notion Greekness principally transcended religious divisions. In this respect, the Greekness of the Byzantine intelligentsia in Italy is part of a wider development in which secular Latinate learning gradually replaced biblical models of kinship and descent by re-introducing tribal identifiers such as ‘Gauls’, ‘Belgae’, ‘Goths’, and ‘Germans’ to delineate perceived group divisions.² In this emerging secularisation of communal belonging, the Greeks held a very special place, which explains why the Byzantine intelligentsia had good reason to adopt the Greek identifier traditionally assigned to them in the Latin West. While the Greek identifier had originally been a means of denying Byzantine claims to Rome, and to refer to the ‘schismatic’ Orthodox, from the fifteenth century onwards, humanists began to regard the Byzantines as the heirs of the ancient Greeks, who were regarded by many of them as the originators of human civilisation.

Assimilation and Distinctiveness: Latin Humanism as an Incentive for Greekness

The Byzantine intelligentsia must have realised that the Greekness assigned to them in Italy gave them an advantage over, for instance, German and French humanists who claimed ancient Gaulish, Germanic, Trojan, or even remote Greek roots, but could not lay claim to the Greek legacy in the same way the

² See here Leerssen (2006b: 36–51).

Byzantines could: the Byzantines were called *Graeci* by their hosts and were regarded as the principal transmitters of Hellenism (although this image seems to have changed in the course of the fifteenth century, as Italian humanists became increasingly self-confident about their Greek learning). Even so, just as Italian humanists catalysed the patriotism of French and German humanists by stressing their inferiority as non-Italians,³ they also fuelled the Greek patriotism of the Byzantine scholars in a more negative way. Although they did not generally call the Byzantines *barbari* as they called the peoples of the North, they did stereotype and stigmatise them as Greeks just as the Romans had done (see Chapter 1, pp. 86–90). The *lotte* or battles between Byzantine Greeks and Italian humanists illustrate that Italian humanists caused Byzantine scholars to defend their Greekness against stereotyping. When Agaso ridiculed George Trapezuntius because he was a Greek, the Cretan scholar defended Greece out of patriotic “pietas” (see on this affair Chapter 4, pp. 140–44). Just like the French and later German humanists, the Byzantines had constantly to defend their claims to cultural precedence against Italian cultural hegemony. For this reason, the Byzantines’ confrontation with Latin humanists empowered rather than reduced their awareness of the ancient Greek past and so fuelled their Greek patriotism.

Although they assimilated the name (*Graeci*) and accepted role (transferring Greek learning) that Italian humanists had assigned to them, this is not to say that the Byzantine scholars of the Italian diaspora simply parroted Latin views on what it meant to be Greek. By accepting the Greek name and Latin ethnographical templates, they did assimilate to Western norms, but at the same time, they manipulated and criticised these to create a sense of cultural self-sufficiency and supremacy in a dominantly Latin order.⁴ This means that their self-presentation was a constant negotiation between the suggestion of assimilation and the assertion of distinctiveness. Their distinctiveness as Greeks relied on a persistent form of Hellenocentrism, which was not always to their advantage, as it annoyed the Latins. Apart from their tendency to ‘Hellenise’ the Latins, this appears from the fact that they used their Greek learning to establish their cultural superiority and to formulate their notion of cultural debt (see in particular Chapter 5).

Even in their state of political and military disarmament, their self-declared privileged kinship with the ancient Hellenes provoked a strong sense of cultural superiority or Hellenocentrism in the Byzantines. While they were dependent upon Western support, they could boast an impressive parade of

3 See here Hirschi (2012: 142–56) and Chapter 2, pp. 72–90.

4 The assimilative aspect of their Greekness is emphasised in Kaldellis (2014: 15).

renowned heroes among their ancestors. This enabled them to maintain a kind of collective honour when their political and diplomatic status was lower than ever. The combination of a diplomatically low but culturally high status probably encouraged the Byzantines to exploit and emphasise their cultural efforts in diplomatic contexts.⁵ They found that non-Greeks were indebted to the ancient Greeks for their achievements in the most important domains of human civilisation. As they saw themselves as heirs of the ancient Greeks, they claimed a “remuneratio” (compensation) for their ancestors’ achievements. Although Chalcondylas referred to a recompense for Greek military support in the Gothic Wars, the post-Byzantines mostly claimed compensation for the cultural achievements of the ancient Hellenes. The claim of cultural debt had already been implied by Cardinal Bessarion in his memorandum to Constantine Palaeologus (see Chapter 3, pp. 106–07). As we have seen, Ianus Lascaris worked out the various political possibilities of this claim, first in a cultural setting in his *Florentine Oration*, and later in a more properly diplomatic setting in his speech for Charles V (see Chapter 3, pp. 120–122 and Chapter 5, pp. 175–76).

The tension between assimilation and distinctiveness in the self-presentation of the Byzantine Greeks surfaced in Ianus Lascaris’ *Florentine Oration* (discussed in Chapter 5), which also shows how their Hellenocentrism opened the gates of new arenas of conflict. In the speech, Lascaris assimilated the Latins with the Greeks in terms of their kinship relation, their shared past, and common cultural features. In this way, Lascaris harnessed the Latins’ admiration for Greek culture and their attempt to capitalise on it to the benefit of the Greeks. On the other hand, he also maintained the boundaries between Greeks and Latins by stressing the linguistic degeneration and general cultural inferiority of the Latins. This sense of cultural superiority, or Hellenocentrism, was common. Constantine Lascaris, for example, argued that everything praiseworthy about Calabria and Sicily was *Greek*. Giovanni Gemisto also *Hellenised* the inhabitants of Marseilles and the Iberian Gravians. Michele Marullo claimed that Italy had originally been Greek and Rome boasted of its Greek foundations. Such Hellenocentric attempts to bridge the gap with the Latins did not reckon with the cultural sensibilities of Latin humanists who, even if they were fervent Hellenists, insisted upon their Latinity and Latin cultural precedence (see Chapter 2, pp. 79–82).

Traditional views of the Byzantine intelligentsia in Italy have normally focussed on their role as transmitters, disseminators, and preservers of Greek

5 As Hirschi (2012: 98–101) explains, two eminent measuring sticks of national honour in fifteenth-century Europe were precisely “internationally certified” heroes and achievements and diplomatic precedence.

learning. The previous chapters, however, show that there was more to their cultural enterprise. Exploring Greek views of the Ottoman Turks, Nancy Bisaha showed that Greeks skilfully manipulated “the deepest concerns of their Latin audience”, which says much about their role in the humanist movement.⁶ As we have seen, their construction of Greekness demonstrates something similar. Moreover, it demonstrates that we cannot look at the Byzantine intelligentsia in Italy solely in the context of the textual transmission from Byzantium to Italy. As such, it confirms the general idea that cultural transmission is not a simple, one-directional process like “high-fidelity broadcasting of classical music”.⁷ Although this might sound commonplace after decades of cultural and literary theory, even a sophisticated critic of modern cultural imperialism observed that, in the Renaissance,

the Greek classics served the Italian, French, and English humanists without the troublesome interposition of actual Greeks. Texts by dead people were read, appreciated, and appropriated by people who imagined an ideal commonwealth. This is one reason that scholars rarely speak suspiciously or disparagingly of the Renaissance.

The author contrasts this situation with what, according to him, usually happens in the modern era, where “thinking about cultural exchange involves thinking about domination and forcible appropriation”.⁸ Nonetheless, the previous exploration of Greekness showed some “troublesome Greeks” at work. Although they did not have much choice other than to embrace the Greekness that the Italians assigned to them, they interposed themselves into the process of transmission as the rightful heirs of the “dead people” whose texts they claimed as theirs. In this context, the humanist appropriation of the Greek legacy appears far less uncomplicated—if not to say less innocent—than the pictures painted in books as diverse as *Scribes and Scholars* and *Culture and Imperialism*.⁹

Although they presented themselves as the ‘natural’ heirs of the ancient Hellenes, the Byzantine intelligentsia were not the only group of people who had an interest in appropriating ancient Greece, and their attempts to appropriate the name and the heritage of the ancient Hellenes do not stand alone in early modern Europe. Although Italian humanists were generally

6 Bisaha (2004: 117).

7 Grafton in Grafton and Blair (1990: 2).

8 Said (1994: 235).

9 Reynolds and Wilson (1974: 108–46) and Said (1994: 234–35).

too infatuated with ancient Rome, if we look north of the Alps, French and German humanists in particular demanded their share of the Greek heritage. Regarded as *barbari* by the Italians, they responded to Italian cultural chauvinism. As they became ever more self-confident, from the later fifteenth century onwards, they formulated alternative identities capable of competing with 'Roman' claims of cultural primacy. As it did for the Byzantine intelligentsia in Italy, Hellenism served this purpose well for these Northern humanists, too. With the Reformation, the inclination of German elites in particular to distance themselves from Rome became even more pronounced. Beyond their 'Gaulish' and 'German' pasts, French and German humanists emphasised their 'Greek connections' in order to distinguish themselves from the Italians. They emphasised the similarities they saw between Greek and French or German, and some of these writers even claimed Greek roots and declared that they were, partially at least, Greek. As they also vied among themselves for the most 'privileged' connection with ancient Greece, the Greek legacy rapidly became implicated in the emergent antagonism between them as well.¹⁰

Perhaps due to the decreasing visibility of the Byzantine Greek intelligentsia after the turn of the sixteenth century, European humanists did not regard the few Greek scholars in the West as serious obstacles to their own Hellenising claims. If only for this reason, the Greek intelligentsia stood largely outside the nascent struggle for cultural, or national, supremacy among the European elites—and this situation persisted until Europe, soaring on the wings of philhellenism, 'returned' ancient Greece to the Greeks in the eighteenth century and so created arguments over cultural ownership that are still relevant today, as Nikos Dimou, quoted at the outset of this Chapter, reminds us. This story, however, awaits another author.

Unity and Diversity: 'Greek identity' and the Multiplicity of Greekness

Byzantine expatriates in Italy all identified with the ancient Hellenes and called themselves after them. Nevertheless, this uniformity in their self-presentation must not conceal the fact that they often represented their Greekness in very different ways. To speak of 'Greek identity' in this context would presuppose a uniformity of vision the sources do not corroborate. If we look closely at the evidence, moreover, we see that there was not one single coherent discourse

10 See here Van Hal (2011: 198–200), with references. Northern European claims to the Greek heritage have not yet been studied systematically.

about Greekness, even though ancient Greece was invariably important. For example, it is very difficult to establish the decisive criteria for Greekness in the first place. We have seen that shared language, education, birthplace, and sometimes group character all played their role, but the application of such criteria was highly dependent upon context. This explains that even an Italian could be called a Hellene by virtue of his knowledge of ancient Greek in one context, whereas he was seen as a member of the Latin out-group due to his Latin or Roman ancestry in another.

In other respects as well, multiplicity of viewpoints is the norm. While, for instance, for Giovanni Gemisto territoriality constituted Hellenism, Constantine Lascaris dissociated the Greek tradition from its traditional heartland of Greece. While Bessarion emphasised the Athenian elements in the Greek tradition, Marullo saw the revival of Spartan militarism as an appropriate response to the fall of Constantinople. Markos Mousouros saw Plato as one of the protagonists of the Greek people, whereas Trapezuntius imagined him plotting the downfall of the West together with Mohammed. While Bessarion and Ianus Lascaris believed that the Hellenes would survive through the preservation of Greek literature, the exile poetry of Cabacio Rallo suggested that the survival of Hellenism was impossible without a free Greece. And so forth and so on.

An explanation for the multiple representations of Greekness is that the post-Byzantines in Italy shaped their views of Greekness in all kinds of different contexts, for various purposes, which the case studies tried to reconstruct. To recall Erving Goffman's metaphor to explain his notion of self-presentation, there was not one single stage on which a well-orchestrated choir of Byzantines wore their pre-fabricated Greek masks, but rather a multiplicity of stages that forced individual Byzantines to rethink their ways of performance and the use of their attributes. There were, moreover, no controlling institutions that could have engendered a coherent ideology of Greekness, there was no large-scale propaganda that sustained it, and even before 1453 there had not been a state or polity promoting forms of national Hellenism.¹¹ Therefore, the Hellenic self-representations under study do hardly represent a coherent view on what we would perhaps now call a 'national Greek identity'.

Despite the different ideas of Greekness, however, the Byzantines' self-representation in Italy, their appropriation of ancient Greece, and their identification with the ancient Hellenes relate to the heated debate over the

11 As Kaldellis (2007: 389) points out, Hellenism (to the degree that it was not understood as paganism) generated the fewest institutions if compared to the Roman and Christian traditions in Byzantium.

emergence of a sense of Greek national consciousness in the interval period between the decline of Byzantium and the rise of the nation state Hellas. It has been one of the aims of this study to reframe the relation between the Byzantine diaspora and the evolution of Greekness after Byzantium. In some respects, the self-representation of the Byzantine scholars in Italy prefigures the self-representation of the Greek intelligentsia that appeared on the European scene in the age of nationalism. This is especially so where it concerns the reinvention of the ancient Hellenes as precursors and ancestors of the Greeks. Modernist accounts of the 'making of modern Greece' normally overlook this fact, while nationalist stories of 'the emergence of the Greek nation' often overstress it. The previous chapters challenge both views.

As modernist accounts narrow their scope to modernity, the early modern period falls outside their scope. The fact that the Greek War of Independence and the new Greek state found their ideological basis in ancient Greece is not to say that the "Hellenising of the *Rhomaioi*" is the prerogative of the emergent Greek intelligentsia of the 1790s.¹² Yet in current accounts of the history of the national Greek idea, the reinvention of the ancient Greeks has been considered to be the "distinctive contribution of the Romantic movement", going back to the 1790s. The same has been said about the conjunct notions that the inhabitants of Hellas descended from the ancient Hellenes and that the liberation of Greece was not the creation of something new but the restoration of an ancient status quo.¹³ The previous chapters showed that the Byzantine scholars of the Italian diaspora used similar strategies to legitimise their privileged link with the ancient Greeks.

Consequently, their case reminds us that strategies like those mentioned emerged long before the political and cultural ideology of nationalism began to crystallise. Although this study did not aim to rewrite the history of Greek national identity or national thought, it does confirm the increasingly accepted view that symbolical constructions we now construe as specifically 'national' and therefore 'modern' have a history that predates the era in which national-

¹² Cf. Politis (1998: 1, 8).

¹³ Beaton and Ricks (2009: 3). Cf. Beaton and Ricks (2009: 7), emphasising that the notable importance of the idea of national restoration is in the success of the Greeks in establishing, from the 1820s onwards, a link with antiquity "as first and foremost among the grounds for the legitimacy of the modern nation state". Along the same lines, Speck (2003: 282) observes that "only in the last decades before the Greek revolution did some Greek intellectuals, partly influenced by the French Revolution, try to define their own nation, try to find a new identity. They rejected Byzantine multiculturalism and tried to define their own nation: the nation of the Greeks, defining themselves as the successors of the ancient Greeks, speaking their language and settled in their territories".

ist ideologists began to re-appropriate them and adapted them to their needs. As such, the reinvention of the ancient Greeks by the Byzantine intelligentsia in Italy shows the importance of studying the archaeology of national symbols and images to understand, historically, the particular symbolic force and cultural significance of modern nationalism.¹⁴

In conjunction with this, it has been shown that the case of the Byzantine intelligentsia cannot be simply cited to demonstrate the existence of Greek national continuity in the fifteenth century. Such a view obscures something very important. As national accounts understand the role of the expatriate scholars as part of a teleological evolution towards Greek liberation, they cast a shadow over the specificities of the Byzantines' historical positions, concerns and challenges, and often impose nationalist views and attitudes on fifteenth-century minds. However, late- and post-Byzantine appropriations of the ancient Greek past emerged from cultural and historical contexts that were unlike the circumstances in which modern and contemporary Greeks appropriate the ancient past of Greece.

A comparative exploration of the ways in which Greekness was constructed in various periods and contexts would contribute a great deal to a more nuanced and differentiated understanding of what is often lumped together under the monolithic notion of 'Greek identity'.¹⁵ Such an approach would emphasise changes in contexts and functions of what are only vestiges or monuments of the ancient past from a narrowly national perspective.¹⁶ This unwritten history will not be linear, and continuity with the ancient Hellenes will not always be as central as it was in the story of the fifteenth century. Even in the later sixteenth century, for example, Greek scholars associated with the St. Athanasios College in Rome designed alternatives to the classicising Greekness of their predecessors in the West, in order to accommodate the 'Romaean' or Roman sensibilities of their compatriots in the Greek-speaking

14 This is argued with particular force by Anthony D. Smith (2009) in his recent criticism of modernist approaches to national symbolism.

15 Useful conceptual and methodological cues for further research along these lines can be found in Beaton (2007), comparing evidence from the early nineteenth and mid-twelfth centuries in order to shed new light on the question of Hellenic continuity and national identity. For a similar but less text-oriented approach, see Magdalino (1991). Not only did cultural and historical circumstances of self-representation differ, but also the objects of appropriation were different in the early modern and modern periods. While, for example, modern Greeks claim ancient works of art and architecture (Hamilakis 2007), the Byzantine intelligentsia in Renaissance Italy asserted their cultural ownership of Greek language and literature more than anything else.

16 See here Alexiou (2002: 9–16).

East.¹⁷ This resulted in interesting redefinitions. For example, John Matthew Caryophylles (a student of the Greek College at Rome) in his Greek works re-appropriated the Roman label for the Catholic Greeks without, however, abandoning the Greek and Hellenic names for himself and his compatriots. Rather than dissociating from the self-declared Romans of Byzantium, Caryophylles tried to play the Roman label out of the hands of his Orthodox opponents and subtly change its meaning to fit his own Roman vision.¹⁸ In the self-made Latin translation of his work, on the other hand, Caryophylles called himself and his fellow Romans “Graeci”, showing an astute awareness both of what he wanted to be and of what his audiences wanted to see. This strongly suggests that the ever-changing circumstances continued to provoke new directions in the ways in which Greeks—or should we now say Romans?—sought to forge positions for themselves in the West.

As the previous chapters have shown, the reinvention of ancient Greece in the Italian diaspora was a conscious revival rather than a clear mark of manifest continuity with the ancient past. If we want to see continuity after all, we may find it in the constant reinvention and re-appropriation of ancient Greece, which in itself testifies to the vitality and significance of the Hellenic tradition for so many people, past and present.

17 A preliminary exploration of this evolution is Glaser (2006).

18 See here in particular Caryophylles' response to the catechism of the Orthodox Greek Zachary Gerganos, written in vernacular Greek and published in Wittenberg in 1622 (Caryophylles 1631). On Caryophylles more generally, see Knös (1962: 324, 426–7), with references.

Appendices

1 Gemisto's Gallery of Greek Heroes (Gemisto 1516: fols. Biii^v–Ciii^r) (see also Chapter 7, 258–59)

The Table below lists the Greek heroes evoked by Giovanni Gemisto in the *Protrepticon et pronosticon*. The ninety-five heroes Gemisto lists in his catalogue can be subdivided in three, sometimes overlapping categories: heroes associated with the voyages of the Argonauts and the Calydonian Hunt (nos. 1–41), heroes associated with the Trojan War (nos. 42–76), and heroes associated with the early political and military mytho-history of Greece (nos. 77–95).

1–41 <i>Heroes associated with the voyages of the Argonauts and the Calydonian Hunt</i> (fols. Biv ^r –Civ ^r)		
1	Aesonides	Iason, son of Aeson. Thessalian hero from Iolcus, leader of the Argonauts, participant in the Calydonian Hunt (Apollod. 1.68; Hyg. <i>Fab.</i> 14.1, 173.1).
2	Tirynthius heros	Heracles, the most prominent Panhellenic hero in Greek myth and cult, who joined the Argonauts (Hyg. <i>Fab.</i> 14.10). The phrasing “Tirynthius heros” in this position in the line is known from Latin poetry (e.g. Ov. <i>Ars.</i> 2.21, <i>Fast.</i> 2.349, <i>Met.</i> 7.410; Stat. <i>Theb.</i> 7.489; V. Fl. 2.373).
3	Telamon	Son of king Aeacus and of Endeis, brother of Peleus (no. 4). Participant in the Calydonian Hunt and in the expedition of the Argonauts (Apollod. 3.158–61; Hyg. <i>Fab.</i> 14.8, 173.2).
4	Peleus	Son of Aeacus and Endeis, brother of Telamon (no. 3) (Apollod. 3.106) who took part in the adventures of the Argonauts and the Calydonian hunt (Pind. fr. 172; Hyg. <i>Fab.</i> 14.8, 173.2) and in Heracles’ march against Troy and the Amazons (Eur. <i>Andr.</i> 790–95; Apoll. Rhod. 1.553–58; Apollod. 1.111).

TABLE (*cont.*)

5	Iphidamas (Amphidamas?)	Iphidamas was a Trojan hero who fought against the Greeks and tried to injure Agamemnon (<i>Il.</i> 11.218–63; <i>Hyg. Fab.</i> 113.1). Perhaps Gemisto confused him with Amphidamas, the Argonaut (<i>Apoll. Rhod.</i> 1.161, 2.1046; <i>Hyg. Fab.</i> 14.14).
6	Canthus	Argonaut (<i>Apoll. Rhod.</i> 1.77, 4.1485–1501; <i>Hyg. Fab.</i> 14.28; <i>V. Fl.</i> 6.317–41).
7	Phalerus	Son of Alcon and one of the Argonauts (<i>Apoll. Rhod.</i> 1.96f.; <i>Hyg. Fab.</i> 14.9; <i>V. Fl.</i> 4.654).
9	Iphitus	Argonaut (<i>Apoll. Rhod.</i> 1.86; <i>Hyg. Fab.</i> 14.17). Gemisto probably took the epithet (“Naubolides”) from <i>V. Fl.</i> 1.362–63.
10	Coronus	One of the Argonauts (<i>Apoll. Rhod.</i> 1.57f.; <i>Hyg. Fab.</i> 14.3).
11	Iphiclus	Son of Phylacus, Argonaut (<i>Hyg. Fab.</i> 14.2). The Melampus-story (<i>Paus.</i> 4.36.3; <i>Apollod.</i> 1.98–102) included by Gemisto is also alluded to in <i>Prop.</i> 2.3b. Not to be confused with “Iphiclus alter” in <i>Hyg. Fab.</i> 14.17.
13	Butes	According to one tradition, an Argonaut (<i>Apoll. Rhod.</i> 1.95ff.; <i>Hyg. Fab.</i> 14.9). The epithet “Enniades” (probably “Aeneades”) connects Butes the Argonaut with another Butes, who occurs in the entourage of Aeneas in the <i>Aeneid</i> (<i>Verg. A.</i> 11.690).
14	Proetus	Mythical king of Argos (<i>Hom. Il.</i> 6.157; <i>Pind. Nem.</i> 10.77) or Tiryns (<i>Apollod.</i> 2.25), son of Abas and Aglaea.
15	proles magnanimae Leda	Castor and Pollux, or Dioscuri, sons of Zeus and Leda, Argonauts (<i>Hyg. Fab.</i> 14.12). They also participated in the Calydonian hunt (<i>Apollod.</i> 1.67; <i>Hyg. Fab.</i> 173.1).
16	Eurydamas	Son of Ctimenus, Argonaut (<i>Apoll. Rhod.</i> 1.67; <i>Hyg. Fab.</i> 14.5).

17	Menoetius	Father of Patroclus and Myrto (Apollod. 3.13.8), who took part in the adventures of the Argonauts (Apoll. Rhod. 1.69f.; Apollod. 1.9.16; Hyg. <i>Fab.</i> 14.6), but also appears in the <i>Iliad</i> (Hom. <i>Il.</i> 11.771, 18.325).
18	Laodocus	Son of Bias and Pero, native of Argos, Argonaut just like his brothers Talaus (no. 19) and Arius (no. 20) (Apoll. Rhod. 1.119, V. Fl. 1.358).
19	Talaus	Brother of Laodocus and Arius (see nos. 18 and 20).
20	Arius	Brother of Laodocus and Talaus (see nos. 18 and 19).
21	tergemini fratres, generosi proles Abantis	It seems that Abas had two sons (the twins Acrisius and Proetus, no. 14) and one daughter (Idomene), but not three sons (Paus. 2.162; Apollod. 2.2, 2.24).
22	Echion	Son of Hermes and Antianeira and, according to the Latin tradition, both an Argonaut (V. Fl. 4.734; Hyg. <i>Fab.</i> 14.3) and a Calydonian hunter (Ov. <i>Met.</i> 8.311, 345; Hyg. <i>Fab.</i> 173.1).
23	Eurytus	Son of Hermes and Antianeira and, just like his brother Echion (no. 22), an Argonaut and Calydonian hunter (Hyg. <i>Fab.</i> 14.3, 173.1).
24	Aethalides	Son of Hermes and Eupolemea, herald during the Argonauts' campaign (Apoll. Rhod. 1.51–55, 640–47; Hyg. <i>Fab.</i> 14.3).
25	Tiphys	Son of Hagnias (hence “Hagniades”), Argonaut and helmsman of the Argo (Apollod. 1.111; Apoll. Rhod. 1.105–10, 1.401–02; Hyg. <i>Fab.</i> 14.9; V. Fl. 1.481–83). Gemisto probably took his description of Tiphys (“Hagniades, qui lora carinae Argoos tenuit sapiens . . .”) from V. Fl. 1.481–83.
26	Nauplius	Son of Poseidon, founder of Nauplia, Argonaut: perhaps a conflation of two distinct figures with the same name (on which see <i>NP</i> s.v. “Nauplius”). The epithet “Neptunius heros” is normally applied to Theseus (no. 41) (cf. Ov. <i>Ep.</i> 4.109, 17.21, <i>Met.</i> 9.1; Stat. <i>Theb.</i> 12.588).

TABLE (*cont.*)

27	Zetes	With no. 28. Wind gods, the winged sons of Boreas and Oreithyia, also Argonauts (Apollod. 1.111, 3.199; Apoll. Rhod. 1.211–23; Ov. <i>Met.</i> 6.712–21; Hyg. <i>Fab.</i> 14.18).
28	Calais	See no. 27.
29	Amphion	Brother of Asterion (no. 30), Argonaut (Hyg. <i>Fab.</i> 14.15).
30	Asterion	Brother of Amphion (no. 29), Argonaut (Hyg. <i>Fab.</i> 14.15). Not to be confused with no. 34.
31	Ancaeus (?)	“Agneus” may refer to either the son of Lycurgus of Tegea or the son of Poseidon. The former was part of the Argo’s crew (Apollod. 1.163f.; Hyg. <i>Fab.</i> 4.14) and participated in the Calydonian hunt (Apollod. 1.68; Paus. 8.4.10; Ov. <i>Met.</i> 8.391–402; Hyg. <i>Fab.</i> 173.3, 248.1). The latter became helmsman of the Argonauts after the death of Tiphys (no. 25) (Apoll. Rhod. 2.894; Hyg. <i>Fab.</i> 14.16, 26). Gemisto apparently regarded Ancaeus as identical with “Pleuronian Ancaeus” (“Ἀγκαῖος Πλευρώνιος”), mentioned in <i>Il.</i> 23.635, since he referred to him as “Pleuronius ille” (or “heros” in the manuscript).
32	Orpheus	Part of the Argo’s crew (Pind. <i>Pyth.</i> 4.176f.; Apoll. Rhod. 1.32–34; Hyg. <i>Fab.</i> 14.1).
33	Lynceus	Argonaut (Apoll. Rhod. 1.151; Hyg. <i>Fab.</i> 14.12) and Calydonian Hunter (Apollod. 1.67; Ov. <i>Met.</i> 8.304; Hyg. <i>Fab.</i> 173.2).
34	Asterion	Son of Cometes, Argonaut. Gemisto’s description (“proles generosa Cometae”) is strongly reminiscent of V. Fl. 1.355–56. Not to be confused with no. 30.
35	Caeneus	A Lapith ruler, father of the Argonaut Coronus (Apoll. Rhod. 1.57f.) and an Argonaut himself (Hyg. <i>Fab.</i> 14.4), who also participated in the Calydonian hunt (Hyg. <i>Fab.</i> 173.3). The brief description (“ferox, Venerem qui novit utramque . . .”) is reminiscent of the story as told by Ovid (Ov. <i>Met.</i> 12.169–209, 459–535).

36	Inous ("Innius")	Melicertes, later Palaemon, son of Ino (for the phrasing, see Verg. <i>A.</i> 5.823, <i>G.</i> 1.437). Gemisto probably confused Melicertes/Palaemon with another Palaemon, who was an Argonaut (Apollod. 1.9.16; Apollon. Rhod. 1.202).
37	Admetus	King in Thessalian Pherae, Argonaut (Apoll. Rhod. 1.49; Hyginus, <i>Fab.</i> 14.2) and Calydonian hunter (Hyg. <i>Fab.</i> 173.2).
38	Archas	Son of Zeus and Callisto who gave his name to the Arcadians and was considered to be the bringer of civilisation (Paus. 8.4.1).
39	Cepheus	Arcadian local hero, mentioned as participant in the Argonaut expedition (Apoll. Rhod. 1.161; Hyg. <i>Fab.</i> 14.14).
40	Perseus	Greek hero, grandson of Acrisius, who fetched the head of Medusa (the most detailed literary depiction of which is Pind. <i>Pyth.</i> 10.31–50).
41	Theseus	Athenian hero, belonging to the generation before the Trojan War, best known for his voyage to Crete and killing of the Minotaurus. According to Hyg. <i>Fab.</i> 14.5 and 173.2, he was both an Argonaut and a Calydonian hunter.
42–76	<i>Heroes associated with the Trojan War (fols. Cī^v–Cī^v)</i>	
42	Aeacides	Patronym for all those who traced their lineage back to Aeacus, most notably Peleus, Achilles, and Neoptolemus. As Peleus and Neoptolemus are mentioned elsewhere (nos. 4 and 64), "Aeacides" here most probably refers to Achilles (compare no. 54: Poenix is called "the guardian of Aeacides").
43	Atrides	Agamemnon and Menelaus, Greek protagonists in Homer's <i>Iliad</i> .
44	Tydides	Diomedes, son of Tydeus and Deipyle, a Greek hero from Troy who killed Pandarus, and injured both Aphrodite and Ares (<i>Il.</i> 5.290–351, 825–63).
45	Ajax	One of the Greek protagonists in Homer's <i>Iliad</i> .

TABLE (*cont.*)

46	Menestheus	Son of Peteus, suiter of Helen, and Athenian leader at Troy (Hom. <i>Il.</i> 2.552ff.; Apollod. 3.10.8; Hyg. <i>Fab.</i> 81), also the founder of Elaea in Aeolis (Str. 13.3.5).
47	Teucer	Son of Telamon, warrior before Troy, half-brother of Ajax (Apollod. <i>Epit.</i> 5.6; Q. S. 4.405–35).
48	Peneleus	Son of Hippalcimus and Asterope, leader of the Boeotians in the Trojan War (Hom. <i>Il.</i> 2.494; Hyg. <i>Fab.</i> 97.8).
49	Pylius senex	Nestor, the wise adviser of the Greek troops before Troy. The description (“Pylius senex”) is reminiscent of Sen. <i>Tro.</i> 210 and Stat. <i>Silv.</i> 2.2.107.
50	Ulysses/Odysseus	Greek warrior before Troy and the Greek protagonist of the <i>Odyssey</i> .
51	Thoas	Mythical ruler of Lemnos (Hom. <i>Il.</i> 14.230, 23.745; Hyg. <i>Fab.</i> 97.12), son of Dionysus and Ariadne. Through his daughter Hypsipyle (Ov. <i>Ep.</i> 6.114), Thoas is also linked to the legend of the Argonauts as she saved him from the attack of the Lemnian women (Apollod. 1.114f.).
52	Leitus	Son of Alektor, Boeotian hero involved in the adventures of the Argonauts and in the Trojan War (Hom. <i>Il.</i> 2.494, 17.601; Eur. <i>IA</i> 259; Apollod. 1.113, 3.130; Hyg. <i>Fab.</i> 97.9).
53	Thrasymedes	Son of Nestor and Anaxibia, Greek hero at Troy (Hom. <i>Od.</i> 3.412–15; Apollod. 1.94; Hyg. <i>Fab.</i> 97.5).
54	Phoenix	Son of Amyntor, friend and teacher of Achilles, Greek hero at Troy (Hom. <i>Il.</i> 9.447ff.; Hyg. <i>Fab.</i> 97.2), also involved in the Calydonian hunt (Ov. <i>Met.</i> 8.307; Hyg. <i>Fab.</i> 173.3).
55	Patroclus	Son of Menoetius, Greek hero at Troy, close friend of Achilles (Hom. <i>Il.</i> 11.796–803, 11.805–48; Hyg. <i>Fab.</i> 97.2).
56	Podalirius	Son of Asclepius and Epione, brother of Machaon, and like him a heroic or divine physician (Hom. <i>Il.</i> 11.833, cf. 2.731; Hyg. <i>Fab.</i> 97.6).

57	Machaon	Brother of Podalirius, Greek warrior at Troy, commander of 30 ships from Tricca, Ithome, and Oechalia in Thessaly (Hom. <i>Il.</i> 2.729ff.; Hyg. <i>Fab.</i> 97.6).
58	Nireus	Son of Aglaia and Charops, Greek warrior at Troy, the second most beautiful Greek soldier (hence “ <i>eximiae formae</i> ”) (Hom. <i>Il.</i> 2.671ff.; Hyg. <i>Fab.</i> 97.13).
59	Phalerus	= no. 7. Phalerus is also a Trojan warrior killed by Neoptolemus (Q.S. 8.293).
60	Calchas	Famous Greek seer in Troy (Hom. <i>Il.</i> 1.70; Hyg. <i>Fab.</i> 97.15).
61	Meges	Son of Phyleus, sailed with 40 ships from Dulichium to Troy (Hom. <i>Il.</i> 2.625ff.; Hyg. <i>Fab.</i> 97.12).
62	Diocles (?)	“Diotes” probably refers to Diocles: the son of Phyleus, brother of Meges, perhaps to be identified with the Messenian prince whose sons (Crethon and Orsilochus) were slain by Aeneas at Troy (Hom. <i>Il.</i> 5.541f.).
63	Antiphus	Son of the Ithacan Aegyptus, brother of the suitor of Eurynomus, killed by Polyphemus (Hom. <i>Od.</i> 2.15–22; Hyg. <i>Fab.</i> 97.14).
64	Neoptolemus	Son of Achilles and Deidamia, Greek warrior at Troy who killed, among others, Priamus (Paus. 10.27.2, Hom. <i>Od.</i> 11.506–37, cf. Verg. <i>A.</i> 2.529–58; Hyg. <i>Fab.</i> 97.15).
65	Clonius	Leader of the Boeotians at Troy (Hom. <i>Il.</i> 2.495, 15.340; Hyg. <i>Fab.</i> 97.9).
66	Prothoenor	Boeotian warrior at Troy (Hom. <i>Il.</i> 2.495, 14.450–55; Hyg. <i>Fab.</i> 97.9).
67	Alcidis socius	Comrade of Heracles, probably Hylas who joined him during the journey of the Argonauts (Apollod. 1.117; Apoll. Rhod. 1.1153–1283).
68	Protesilaus	Son of Iphicles, Greek warrior at Troy, commander of the Phthiotic contingent, with 40 ships (Hom. <i>Il.</i> 2.704–07).
69	Podarces	Son of Iphicles, brother of Protesilaus (no. 68), leader of the Thessalians from Phylace and other cities in the Trojan War (Hom. <i>Il.</i> 2.704, 13.693; Hyg. <i>Fab.</i> 97.12).

TABLE (cont.)

70	Meriones	A Cretan follower of Idomeneus (no. 71) participating in the Trojan campaign (Hom. <i>Il.</i> 2.645–52; Hyg. <i>Fab.</i> 97.7).
71	Idomeneus	Son of Deucalion, grandson of Minos. Greek warrior, commander of the Cretan contingent of 80 ships in the Trojan campaign (Hom. <i>Il.</i> 2.645–52; Hyg. <i>Fab.</i> 97.7).
72	Telephus	Son of Heracles and Auge, king of Mysia, wounded before Troy by the spear of Achilles (Hyg. <i>Fab.</i> 101).
73	Schedius	Son of king Iphitus (no. 9) and grandson of Naubolus, leader of the Phocians with 40 ships (Apollod. 3.129; Hom. <i>Il.</i> 2.517–26; Hyg. <i>Fab.</i> 97.10).
74	Antilochus	Oldest son of Nestor, comrade of Achilles and the leader of the Pylians (Hom. <i>Il.</i> 23.556, <i>Od.</i> 4.187; Hyg. <i>Fab.</i> 97.5).
75	Agapenor	Son of Ancaeus (no. 31?), leader of the Arcadians before Troy (Hom. <i>Il.</i> 2.609; Hyg. <i>Fab.</i> 97.11).
76	Tlepolemus	Son of Heracles and Astyocheia, leader of the contingent from Rhodes before Troy (Hom. <i>Il.</i> 2.653–70, 5.628–62; Hyg. <i>Fab.</i> 97.7).
77–95	<i>Heroes associated with the early political and military mytho-history of Greece (fols. Cii^v–Ciii^r)</i>	
77	Miltiadas	Men like Miltiades (no. 87).
78	Codri	Men like Codrus, son of Melanthus, a mythical king of Athens, who is said to have died voluntarily in order to save the city (Pherecydes, <i>FGrH</i> 3 F 154; Hellanicus, <i>FGrH</i> 4 F 125; Lycurg. <i>Leocrates</i> 84–86; cf. Pl. <i>Smp.</i> 208d).
79	Solones	Men like Solon, the Athenian lawgiver (b. ca. 640 BC) who reformed Athenian legislation around 600 BC (his work survives fragmentarily). From at least the fourth century BC, Solon became to be regarded as the founder of Athenian democracy.

80	Lycurgi	Men like Lycurgus, legendary founder of the Spartan political and social system and regarded as one of the great lawgivers of antiquity (see, e.g., Hdt. 1.65–66).
81	Nicias	Men such as Nicias (ca. 470–413 BC), prominent commander in the Peloponnesian War who laid siege to Syracuse and almost forced it to yield. After initial successes, however, his troops had to surrender, and Nicias was executed in Syracuse (Thuc. 6.8–14, 7.10–15, 84–86).
82	Agiadae (“Agidae”)	The Agiads: one of the two traditional royal dynasties of Sparta whose founding father was the Heraclid Eurysthenes (his son Agis I became the eponymous hero of the house). They were regarded as senior to the Eurypontids (Hdt. 6.51).
83	Pyrrhi	Men like Pyrrhus, king of Epirus and Macedonia (ca. 319–272 BC) who, among other things, supported the Tarentines against Rome: a Panhellenic war of a “new Achilles” against the descendants of Aeneas (Plut. <i>Pyrrhus</i> 15.1–16.1). His many victories became proverbial, but not necessarily in a positive way (“Pyrrhic victory”).
84	similes iuveni qui tot fera regna subegit...	Men like Alexander ‘the Great’, king of Macedonia (Alexander III) (356–323 BC), who established a world empire and Hellenised large parts of the known world.
85	[similes] illi quem iam Panachaia felix constituit fecitque ducem bellicae magistrum barbarici...	Men such as Themistocles (ca. 525–459 BC), who trapped the Persian fleet of Xerxes at Salamis, leading to the defeat of the Persian armies (see, e.g., Plut. <i>Themistocles</i> and Nep. <i>Themistocles</i>).
86	Eumenes	Son of Hieronymus of Cardia, from 342 onwards chancellor for the Macedonian king Philip II and then for Alexander the Great. After the latter’s death, Eumenes advocated the unity of the empire (see further Nep. <i>Eumenes</i> and Plut. <i>Eumenes</i>).

TABLE (*cont.*)

87	Miltiades	Miltiades the Younger (ca. 555–489 BC), the main spokesman of opposition to the Persian invasion who defeated the Persians at the battle of Marathon (see, e.g., Nep. <i>Miltiades</i>).
88	Evagorae	Men like Evagoras (ca. 435–374/3 BC), Greek king of Salamis on Cyprus since ca. 411 BC, whom Isocrates regarded as a bringer of Hellenism in Salamis (Isoc. <i>Or.</i> 9.47).
89	Arati	Men like Aratus, referring either to the tyrant-slaking leader of the Achaean League (245–213 BC) (see further Plut. <i>Aratus</i>), or to a legendary figure in the early history of Sparta (Just. <i>Epit.</i> 3.4.8).
90	Phocion	Athenian <i>strategos</i> (ca. 402–318 BC), leader of the oligarchic regime in Athens, commander of the left wing at the naval victory over Sparta at Naxos (see further Plut. <i>Phocion</i>).
91	Pericles	Athenian statesman during the Golden Age (ca. 495–429) between the Persian and the Peloponnesian Wars (see, e.g., Thuc. 2.65 and Plut. <i>Pericles</i>).
92	Timoleon	Corinthian general (ca. 411–337 BC) who liberated Sicily from tyranny (see Plut. <i>Timoleon</i> ; Nepos, <i>Timoleon</i>).
93	Philopoemen	Achaean statesman (253–183 BC), celebrated into the Roman imperial period as the “last of the Hellenes” and last champion of liberty (Paus. 8.52.6; Plut. <i>Philopoemen</i> 1.7).
94	Alcibiades	Apart from the famous captain in the Peloponnesian War (d. 403 BC), Alcibiades may also refer to the Athenian who supported Cleisthenes against the Peisistratids in 510 BC (Isoc. <i>Or.</i> 16.26), or even to his son who protested against the break between Athens and Sparta after the deposition of Cimon (461/462 BC) (Thuc. 5.43.2, 6.89.2).

95	Cleomenes ("Deomenes")	The name of several Spartan kings between the sixth to the third century BC, but also an Athenian who rejected the Spartan terms of peace in 404 BC (Plut. <i>Lysandros</i> 14). Most probably, reference is to Cleomenes I of the Agiad dynasty (see no. 82) who tried to protect the Athenians against a collaboration of the Aeginians with the Persians (he was king from 520 BC onwards).
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2 Gemisto's imaginary Greece (Gemisto 1516: fols. Eii^r–Fi^r) (see also Chapter 7, pp. 238–41)

The Table below offers a detailed identification of the Greek place names and ethnonyms Gemisto listed in his *Protrepticon et pronosticon*. Apart from the general reference to "Byzantia tellus" (Constantinople and its Thracian hinterland), these fall into four main categories: the Peloponnesus (with the Saronic Gulf), Central Greece (the regions of Attica, Boeotia, Phocis, and Locris), the islands in the Ionian and Aegean Seas (with Crete and Cyprus), and Northern Greece (the regions of Thessaly, Macedonia, Epirus, and Thrace). The first column identifies the places and ethnonyms Gemisto lists in his poem, in the order in which he mentions them in his poem. The second and third columns offer the relevant references to his main sources: Pliny the Elder's *Naturalis historia* (mainly for the place names) and Statius' *Thebaid* (mainly for the short descriptions and epithets). Asterisks signify that, in all the ancient Latin texts available in the Library of Latin Texts (Brepols Publishers, online), a specific place name occurred only in the passage indicated. The fourth and final column offers further clarifications, especially where Gemisto's spelling made the correct identification of the locations difficult. In such cases, the poet's specific spelling (with the relevant variant readings in the edition *E* and the manuscript *M*) and/or the corresponding variant readings in Pliny are included.¹ For this, Mayhoff's critical edition was used. Additionally, where necessary, the six most important contemporary recensions of Pliny's history were consulted (with the editions of 1481 and 1483, collectively referred

1 The following variant readings in Gemisto's poem are particularly 'Plinian': nos. 39, 64, 102, 107, 109, 129, 135, 160, 162, 179, 195, 202, 213, 216 (cf. nos. 39, 130, 188, 196, 217). The following variant readings in Gemisto's poem are 'Statian': nos. 50, 54 (cf. 52).

to as *edd. recc.*).² Variant readings of the regular kind *ae/e*, *y/i*, *-os/-us*, *-um/-on*, *-a/-os*, *t/c*, and *ph/f* have been ignored. So, for instance, Gemisto's "Pheatia" (instead of "Phaeacia") is not explained, while his "Phissella" (instead of "Myscella") is. Where applicable, the final column also records the brief descriptions Gemisto added to some of the names in his catalogue. Especially in his description of the Peloponnesus, Gemisto relied on Statius' *Thebaid*.³

	Place/Tribe	Plin	Stat	Clarifications
1	<i>Byzantium (Constantinople) and its Thracian hinterland (fol. Eii^r).</i>			
1	"Byzantia tellus"	—	—	
2–60	<i>Emphasis on the Peloponnesus (fols. Eii^r–Eiii^r) (but see nos. 4, 9, 13, 22, 25, 48, 56, 57, and 59).</i>			
2	Mycenae, town	4.17	4.56, etc.	"ditesque Mycenae": "ditesque Mycenae" (Hor. C. 1.7.9).
3	Patras, town	4.11, 4.13	—	"Thebanae Patrae".
4	Thebes, town (<i>Boeotia</i>)	4.25	—	
5	Elis, town	4.14	4.238	"Elis superba".
6	Argivians, tribe			"Argivi olim clari".
7	Pelasgians, tribe			"fortesque Pelasgos": "fortes . . . Pelasgos" (<i>Ilias Latina</i> 224, 353).
8	Pisae, city	4.14 ⁴	4.238	"Pisae immites".

2 Sabbadini (1900: 439–48) (cf. Doody 2010: 97) distinguished six recensions, constitutive of fifteen incunabula editions before Erasmus' Basle-edition of 1525. These include: (1) the *editio princeps* of an unknown editor (Venice: Johannes de Spira, 1469); (2) the recension of Giovanni Andrea Bussi (Venice: N. Jenson, 1472); (3) the recension of Niccolò Perotti (Rome: C. Sweynheym and A. Pannartz, 1473); (4) the recension of Filippo Beroaldo (Parma: Stephanus Corallus, 1476); (5) the recension of Angelo and Giacomo Britannico (Venice: Bartolomeo Zani, 1496); and (6) the recension of Giovanni Battista Palmieri (Venice: B. Benalius, 1497; Venice: J. Alvisius, 1499).

3 See nos. 14, 15, 20, 21, 22, 27, 28, 31, 32, 33, 37, 46, 48, 51, 53, 54, 55, 58, 165. Cf. nos. 19, 31, 38, 45, 69, 169, 170.

4 "Pisaeorum oppidum"

	Place/Tribe	Plin	Stat	Clarifications
9	Calydon, town (<i>Aetolia</i>)	4.6	4.104	
10	Sicyon, town	4.12	4.50	"Sicyonque vetusta".
11	"Oebalii" (Spartans), tribe	—	6.326, etc.	"Oebaliique feri".
12	Danai, tribe	—	Passim	
13	Pheraei, tribe (<i>Thessaly</i>)	—	2.163	"rapidique Pheraei".
14	Arcadians, tribe	Passim	Passim	"[Arcades] veteres lunaque et sole priores, arboribus nati": "Arcades huic veteres astris lunaque priores" (Stat. <i>Theb.</i> 4.275).
15	Troezen, town	4.18	4.81	"Thesea Troezen": "Theseia Troezen" (Stat. <i>Theb.</i> 4.81).
16	Aegium, town	4.12, 4.22	4.81	"Aegion . . . fortis".
17	Pylos, town	4.15	4.125, etc.	"generosa Pylos".
18	Epidaurus, town	4.18	4.123 ⁵	"domitrix Epidaurus equorum": "domitrixque Epidaurus equorum" (Verg. <i>G.</i> 2.44).
19	Olenus, town	4.13	4.104	"Olenos Iovis nutrix": "et quae Iove provocat Iden Olenos" (Stat. <i>Theb.</i> 4.104–05).
20	Corinth, town	4.11	—	1. "bimaris Corinthus": "bimaris Corinthus" (Ov. <i>Fast.</i> 4.501, <i>Met.</i> 5.407; Hor. <i>Carm.</i> 1.7.2; Aus. <i>Ecl.</i> 20.3; Prud. <i>Symm.</i> 2.352). 2. "[Corinthus] Inoas quondam lacrimis solata querellas": "it comes Inoas Ephyre solata querellas" (Stat. <i>Theb.</i> 4.59).

5 "rura . . . Epidauria"

TABLE (*cont.*)

	Place/Tribe	Plin	Stat	Clarifications
21	Messene, town	4.15	4.179	"planaque Messenes rura": "planaque Messene" (Stat. <i>Theb.</i> 4.179).
22	Pleuron, town (<i>Aetolia</i>)	4.6	4.103, etc.	"Meleagria Pleuron": "Meleagria Pleuron" (Stat. <i>Theb.</i> 4.103).
23	Amphigenia, town	—	*4.178	"Amphigenia potens armis".
24	"Taenari", inhabitants of Taenarum, gen. Spartans	4.16, etc.	2.32, etc.	
25	(?) Echinus, town (<i>Thessaly</i>)	4.28	—	"Euchius" <i>E</i> : "Euchiis" <i>M</i> (no corresponding variant reading)
26	"Azan" (Azanes/ Azania, tribe/ region)	—	*4.292	"Azan pariter non invida sacris".
27	Lampia, town	4.20	4.290	"nivibus Lampia rigens": "candensque iugis Lampia nivosis" (Stat. <i>Theb.</i> 4.486).
28	Enispe, town	4.20	4.286	"ventosaque Enispe": "ventosaque donat Enispe" (Stat. <i>Theb.</i> 4.486).
29	Tegea, town	4.20	4.287	"aligerique dei genetrice Tegeia tellus": "non Tegea, non ipsa deo vacat alite felix Cyllene" (Stat. <i>Theb.</i> 4.287–88).
30	Inachians	—	Passim	"Inachiique feri".
31	Nonacria, town	4.21 ⁶	4.294	"cautisque Nonacria furtis grata Iovi": "grata pharetrato Nonacria rura Tonanti" (Stat. <i>Theb.</i> 4.294).
32	Pharis, town	—	*4.226	"volucrumque Pharis dulcissima quondam sponte parens Messe recolens Cythereia sacra": "quos Pharis volucrumque parens Cythereia Messe" (Stat. <i>Theb.</i> 4.226) (note the concurrence with Messe, no. 33).

6 "Nonacris"

	Place/Tribe	Plin	Stat	Clarifications
33	Messe, town	—	4.226	See no. 32.
35	Parthenius, mountain	4.20	4.285	“Partheniumque nemus Phoebos Musisque dicatum”.
36	Thyrea, town	4.16	4.48	“et quae Spartanum Thyre legit atra cruorem”: “Lacedaemonium Thyrea lectura cruorem” (Stat. <i>Theb.</i> 4.48).
37	Neris, settlement	—	4.47	“ac rapido Neris metuens spumante Charadro”: “quaeque pavet longa spumantem valle Charadron Neris” (Stat. 4.46–47).
38	Drepanum, promontory	—	4.50	1. “qui colunt Drepani scopulis”: “Drepani scopulos” in Stat. <i>Theb.</i> 4.50. 2. In Pliny (<i>NH</i> 3.88), “promuntorium drepanum” refers to the promontory near Trapani, on the Western coast of Sicily (cf. Verg. <i>A.</i> 3.707).
39	(?) Pylae	4.20	—	“qui colunt saxa Philenes” (cf. app. crit. Plin. <i>NH</i> 4.20, l. 6: “Filae”, “Phile”, “Pallenae”).
40	Styx, river	2.231	4.53	“qui undas Stygii diras venerantur”.
41	Elisson, river	—	*4.52	
42	Inachus, river	4.17	4.712, etc.	
43	(?) Lycaea rura, Lycaeus, mountain	4.21 ⁷	2.206, ⁸ etc.	“Lincea rura”.
44	Ladon, river	4.21	4.289	

⁷ “mons Lycaeus”

⁸ “usque Lycaeos | Partheniosque super saltus Ephyraeaeque rura”

TABLE (cont.)

	Place/Tribe	Plin	Stat	Clarifications
45	Clitor, river	—	*4.289	1. “optatique tibi soceri Ladonis Apollo Pythie, Trinacriis non invida littora campis Clitoris”: “et rapidus Clitor et qui tibi, Pythie, Ladon paene socer” (Stat. <i>Theb.</i> 4.289–90; cf. 4.844: “Apolloneus Ladon”). 2. Vitr. 8.3.21 <i>et al.</i> mention “Clitor” as a town.
46	Eurotas, river	4.16	4.227	“oliviferi Eurotae”: “oliviferi Eurotae” (app. crit. Stat. <i>Theb.</i> 4.227).
47	(?) Erasinus, river	4.17	Passim	“Erassimne”.
48	Aetolian fields, region (<i>Aetolia</i>)	—	*1.453	“Acheloiaque arva” = Stat. <i>Theb.</i> 1.453.
49	Nemea, town	4.20	4.159	
50	Phlius, town	4.13	4.45	1. “Philos” (cf. app. crit. Stat. <i>Theb.</i> 4.45: “Philus” and “Phyllos”). 2. “pecorosa Philos”: “pecorosaque Philos” (app. crit. Stat. <i>Theb.</i> 4.45).
51	Aepy, town	—	*4.180	1. “Epi” (cf. “Αἰπύ” in <i>Il.</i> 2.592 with the discussion in Str. 8.3.24). 2. “ac Thamyris poena iam notum Getibus Aepy”: “et summis ingestum montibus Aepy, quos Helos et Pteleon, Getico quos flebile vati Dorion; hic fretus doctas anteire canendo Aonidas mutos Thamyris damnatus in annos ore simul citharaque—quis obvia numina temnat?” (Stat. <i>Theb.</i> 4.180–84). 3. Apparently, Gemisto thought that Aepy (instead of Dorion) was the place where Thamyris had challenged the Muses.

	Place/Tribe	Plin	Stat	Clarifications
52	(?) Cyllene, mountain	4.21	4.288	1. “illustresque etiam satyro pendente Celaenae”: “inlustres Satyro pendente Celaenas” (Stat. <i>Theb.</i> 4.186). 2. In Statius, Celaenae (a town in Phrygia) is not part of the catalogue proper. Probably Gemisto confused it with “Cyllene” here (cf. <i>Il.</i> 2 2.603).
53	Taygetus, mountain	4.16	4.227	“Taygetusque ferax quem non risere Lacones”: “contra laudant insignis alumnum Taygeti longeque minas risere Lacones” (Stat. <i>Theb.</i> 6.824–25).
54	Orchomenos, town	4.20, 4.29	4.295	1. “Arthemenos” <i>E</i> : “Archemenos” <i>M</i> (cf. app. crit. Stat. <i>Theb.</i> 4.295: “Archemenos”). In Pliny, the recorded variant readings are “Orehomenum” and “Orgohomenum” (see app. crit. at 4.20, l. 4) and “Orthomenus” and “Horcominus” (see the app. crit. at 4.29, l. 3). 2. “Orchomenosque etiam dives”: “dives et Orchomenos” (Stat. <i>Theb.</i> 4.295).
55	Cleonaei, inhabitants of Cleonae	4.20 ⁹	4.160	“Cleonaei Molorchi”: “Cleonaei . . . Molorchi” (Stat. <i>Theb.</i> 4.160).
56	Schoenus, port (on the eastern coast of the Isthmus of Corinth in the northwest of the Saronic Gulf)	4.23	—	“Schoenus et ipsa ferox”.

⁹ “Cleonae”

TABLE (*cont.*)

	Place/Tribe	Plin	Stat	Clarifications
57	(?) Aegina, island (<i>Saronic Gulf</i>)	4.57	7.329	"Eigma" <i>E</i> : "Egina" <i>M</i> .
58	Dyme, town	4.13	4.124	"avia Dyme": "avia Dyme" (Stat. <i>Theb.</i> 4.124).
59	Cenchreae, port of Corinth (<i>on the Saronic Gulf</i>)	4.10, 4.18	4.60	"Cenchrea non humilis".
60	Lerna, forest and marsh near Argos	4.17	4.711, etc.	"dira Lerna".
61–99 <i>Emphasis on the regions of Central Greece (fols. Eüü^r–Eüü^v) (but see nos. 65, 71, 83, and 91).</i>				
61	Attica, region			"tellus et Acciaca insignis cui gloria Athenae, Inclita philosophis magnis ducibusque superbis Magnanimisque viris bello terraque marique, Innumeros mittet procere et munera clara".
62	Athens, town (<i>Attica</i>)			
63	Megara, town (<i>Attica</i>)	4.23	—	
64	Cromyon, town (<i>Attica</i>)	*4.23	—	1. "Cremion" (Cremmyon). The spelling is Plinian (cf. Ov. <i>Met.</i> 7.435: "Cromyon"). 2. "Megaraque et Cremmyon dices pariterque superbae".
65	Pangaeum, mountain (<i>Thrace, on the borders of Macedonia</i>)	4.40, ¹⁰ etc.	6.666, etc.	"Pangaei feri [saxa]".

10 "mons Pangaeus"

	Place/Tribe	Plin	Stat	Clarifications
66	Scironian cliffs (<i>Attica</i>)	4.23	—	“Scironia saxa” (cf. Mela 2.47; Sen. <i>Phaed.</i> 1225; Mart. Cap. <i>Nupt.</i> 6.653).
67	Thespia, city (<i>Boeotia</i>)	4.25	—	“Thespia fatidica”.
68	Rhamnus, town (<i>Attica</i>)	4.24, 4.59	—	“Rhamnus tua tetrica sedes, Diva potens, quae sponte feros nimiumque superbos Elatosque premis”: “Paupertate premis elatos, Christe, superbos” (H. Werdinensis, <i>Hortus deliciarum</i> , l. 1222).
69	Eleusis, town (<i>Attica</i>)	4.23	12.627	“nec non Cerealis Eleusis”: “Cerealis Eleusin” (Stat. <i>Theb.</i> 12.627, cf. Ov. <i>Her.</i> 4.67, <i>Met.</i> 7.439).
70	Aulis, town (<i>Boeotia</i>)	4.26, 4.64	7.333	“Aulisque potens ubi Graia iuventus Dardana regna petens classem conscenderat olim”: “Aulis, Agamemnoniae Graiorumque classis in Troiam coniurantium statio” (Mela 2.45.7).
71	Miletus (<i>Crete</i>)	4.59	—	Most probably, Gemisto refers to the city on Crete. (see Hom. <i>Il.</i> 2.647) and not to Miletus in Ionia.
72	Brauron, village (<i>Attica</i>)	4.24	12.615	“Brauron armipotens”
73	Oropus, coastal town (<i>Attica</i>)	4.24	—	
74	Tanagra, city (<i>Boeotia</i>)	4.26	7.254	“mitis Tanagra”.
75	Opuntians, the inhabitants of Opus (<i>Locris</i>)	4.27 ¹¹	—	“Opuntii feri”.
76	Locris, region	4.1, 4.7, 4.27	—	

11 “sinus Opuntius”

TABLE (cont.)

	Place/Tribe	Plin	Stat	Clarifications
77	Daphnus, port (<i>Phocis</i>)	*4.27	—	1. “Daphus” <i>E</i> : “Daphnis” <i>M</i> (no corresponding variant reading). 2. “Daphnus severa”.
78	(?) Elaea (<i>Crete</i>)	4.59	—	“Helea”. Perhaps Gemisto refers to Elatea (<i>Phocis</i>) but there is no corresponding variant reading in Pliny’s text.
79	Plataeae, city (<i>Boeotia</i>)	4.26	7.333	“dites Plataeae”.
80	Narycii, inhabitants of the city Narycum (<i>Locris</i>)	4.27 ¹²	—	As a people, the “Narycii” appear in Verg. <i>A.</i> 3.399.
81	Alope, town (<i>Locris</i>)	4.27	—	
82	Scarphia, town (<i>Locris</i>)	4.27	—	“Scarphia dira”.
83	Malea (<i>Peloponnesus</i>)	4.22, etc.	4.224, etc.	1. Name of various places on the Peloponnesus. 2. “et nautas nimium terrentia saxa Maleae” (cf. Str. 8.6.20).
84	Delphi, town (<i>Phocis</i>)	4.7	9.513	“fatidici Delphi”.
85	Larumna (<i>Locris</i>)	4.27	—	1. “Larimna” <i>E</i> : “Larina” <i>M</i> (no corresponding variant reading). 2. “Larumna dives”
86	Piraeus, port (<i>Attica</i>)	4.24	—	
87	Thronium, town (<i>Locris</i>)	4.27	—	
88	Eleon, town (<i>Boeotia</i>)	*4.26	—	“Pteleum ferox animo” (cf. app. crit. Plin. <i>NH</i> 4.26, l. 10: “Pteleon”, with <i>NP</i> s.v. “Pteleon”, 2).

12 “Narycum”

	Place/Tribe	Plin	Stat	Clarifications
89	Mycalesus, town (<i>Boeotia</i>)	4.25–26	7.272	
90	Cephisus, river (<i>Attica</i> , <i>Boeotia</i>)	4.8, 24–27	7.340, etc.	
91	Sperchius, river (<i>Thessaly</i>)	4.28	4.845	
92	Callirroe, river (<i>Attica</i>)	4.24, etc.	12.629	
93	Larine (<i>Attica</i>)	*4.24	—	
94	Dirce, river (<i>Boeotia</i>)	4.25	4.8, etc.	“Dirce profunda”.
95	Brilessus = Pentelicon, mountain (<i>Attica</i>)	*4.24	—	“Brisseli scopuli” (no corresponding variant reading).
96	Hymettus, mountain (<i>Attica</i>)	4.24	12.622	“scopuli Himeri nivosi” (no corresponding variant reading).
97	Helicon, mountain (<i>Boeotia</i>)	4.25 ¹³	—	“Musarumque domos sacras, Heliconis et alti culmina ventivagas nimium superantia nubes”.
98	Thermopylae, coastal pass	4.28	—	“Thermopylaeque arctas fauces”.
99	Oeta, mountain	4.28 ¹⁴	4.158	“Oetaeaeque saxa Herculeis quondam maculata cacumina flammis”.
100– 168	<i>Emphasis on the Ionian and Aegean Seas and their islands (fols. Eiii^v–Eiv^v) (but see nos. 127–30, 141, and 167).</i>			
100	Ionian			“Pelagus Ionum Aegeumque”
101	Phaeacia = Scheria, island	4.52	—	1. “Phaeacia prima, Alcinoi pulchris quondam memorabilis ortis”. 2. The identification is debated (see <i>NP</i> s.v. “Scheria”).

¹³ “in nemore Heliconis”

¹⁴ “mons Oeta”

TABLE (*cont.*)

	Place/Tribe	Plin	Stat	Clarifications
102	Othronus, Ionian island	*4.52	—	“Thorone” (cf. app. crit. Plin. <i>NH</i> 4.52, l. 2: “Thoronos”). “Thorone” is also recorded as a town on the Chalcidian peninsula (Plin. <i>NH</i> 4.36).
103	Marathe, Ionian island	*4.53	—	
104	Ericusa, Ionian island	*4.53	—	“tenuisque Ericusa”.
105	Malthace, Ionian island	*4.53	—	
106	Trachie, Ionian island	*4.53	—	“Trachie truces”.
107	Oxia, Ionian island	*4.53	—	“navis Ulixis Arnoxe” (cf. app. crit. Plin. <i>NH</i> 4.53, l. 9: “Arnoxie”).
108	Taphiae, Ionian island	*4.53	—	
109	Prinoessa, Ionian island	*4.53	—	“Primessa parva” (cf. app. crit. Plin. <i>NH</i> 4.53, l. 9: “Primessa”).
110	Echinades, Ionian islands	4.53	2.731	“Echimades dites” (no corresponding variant reading). Pliny included Aegialia (no. 112), Cotonis (no. 111), Thyatira (no. 123), Geoar is (no. 121), Dionysia (no. 122), Cynus (no. 119), Chalcis (no. 118), Pinara (no. 120), and Mystus among the Echinades. Gemisto suggests that the Echinades stand apart from these islands.
111	Cotonis, island (cf. no. 110)	*4.53	—	“Cotonis superba”.
112	Aegialia, island (cf. no. 110)	*4.53	—	“Egiale” (no corresponding variant reading).
113	Melaenae, Ionian island	4.54	12.619	
114	Zacynthus, Ionian island	4.54	—	“multum nebulosa Zacynthus”.

	Place/Tribe	Plin	Stat	Clarifications
115	Dulichium, Ionian island	4.54	—	
116	Ithaca, Ionian island	4.54	—	“Ithacaeque simul, quae providus olim Regna Laertiades tenuit facundus Vlixes”.
117	Euboea, island (<i>Aegean Sea</i>)	4.26	9.768	
118	Chalcis, Ionian island (cf. no. 110)	4.53	4.106	
119	Cyrrus, Ionian island (cf. no. 110)	*4.53	—	“Cyrrus nivosa”.
120	Pinara, Ionian island (cf. no. 110)	*4.53	—	
121	Georais, Ionian island (cf. no. 110)	*4.53	—	“Gearis” (no corresponding variant reading).
122	Dionysia, Ionian island (cf. no. 110)	4.53	—	
123	Thyatira, Ionian island (cf. no. 110)	4.53	—	1. “Thyatira Quaeque vaga Ionias agitata e fluctibus omnes Aegeasque etiam lustraverat asteris oras, Fatidici quondam Phoebi castaeque Dianae Vt perhibent, natale solum venerabile, vates”. 2. Gemisto confuses the Ionian island with Thyatira (present-day Akhisar), situated on the Lycus river, forty miles southeast of Pergamum on the road to Sardis, where there were temples of Apollo and Diana.
124	Strophades, Ionian islands	4.55	—	

TABLE (cont.)

	Place/Tribe	Plin	Stat	Clarifications
125	Prote, Ionian island	4.55	—	Mart. Cap. <i>Nupt.</i> 6.643 lists Prote as one of the Stoechades on the Southern coast of Gaul.
126	Cythera, Ionian island	4.56–57	—	“sacra Cythera”.
127	Pityusa, island (<i>Argolic Gulf</i>)	4.56	—	“Pithiussa” <i>E</i> : “Pithiusa” <i>M</i> (no corresponding variant reading).
128	Creta, island (<i>Mediterranean Sea</i>)	4.58	—	“Quamque ferunt veteres centum tenuisse superbas, Creta, Iovis magni populisque et moenibus urbes, Insula magna potens, quondam Minoia regna, Passiphaes ubi dira lues (proh numina!), proles Cecropios olim innumeros laniavit ephebos, Magnanimi Aegidis fatalis victima, taurus, Cuius adusque modo testis labyrinthus habetur; Quam ferus Alcides, famae si credere fas est, Vrsis atque lupis virisque gerentibus olim Anguibus, ut perhibent, nocuis purgaverat omnem Victor et innocuam et tutam nunc usque reliquit”.
129	Arine, island (<i>Argolic Gulf</i>)	*4.56	—	“Irrine” (cf. app. crit. Plin. <i>NH</i> 4.56, l. 16: “Irine”).
130	(?) Aperopia (<i>Argolic Gulf</i>)	*4.56	—	“Pironis” (cf. app. crit. Plin. <i>NH</i> 4.56, l. 17: “Epiropia”).
131	Eleusa, Aegean island	*4.57	—	“pinguis Eleusa”.
132	Carpathus, Aegean island	*4.71	—	“Fatidicique etiam quondam domus inclita Protei, Carpathos Aegeis nomen quae tradidit undis”.

	Place/Tribe	Plin	Stat	Clarifications
133	Salamis, Aegean island	4.62	—	
134	Ceos, Aegean island	4.62	—	“Coos” (no corresponding variant reading).
135	Phacusa, Aegean island	*4.68	—	“Phocussa” (cf. app. crit. Plin. <i>NH</i> 4.68, l. 11: “Phocusa”).
136	Andrus, Aegean island	4.65, etc.	—	
137	Olearus, Aegean island	4.67	—	
138	Seriphus, Aegean island	4.65	—	“parva Seriphus”: “parva . . . Seriphus” (Iuv. <i>Sat.</i> 6.564, 10. 170; Ov. <i>Met.</i> 5.242).
139	Naxus, Aegean island (cf. no. 147)	4.67	7.686	“marmoribus ferax Naxos”.
140	Parus, Aegean island	4.67	5.182	
141	Carystus, town (<i>Euboea</i> , no. 117)	4.64	7.370	
142	Icaria, Aegean island	4.68	4.655	“Quaeque dedit pelago memorabilis Icara nomen”.
143	Hydrussa, Aegean island	*4.62, 65	—	
144	Psytalia, Aegean island	*4.62	—	“Psitale” (no corresponding variant reading).
145	Scyrus, Aegean island	4.69, 72	—	
146	Glauconnesus, Aegean island	*4.65	—	“glauco Nessus” (no corresponding variant reading).
147	“Anaxo” (cf. no. 139)	4.69	7.686	1. “Maeonidaeque pii tumulo clarissima Anaxo”: “Homeri sepulchro veneranda” (Plin. <i>NH</i> 4.69). 2. For the identification, see the discussion in Chapter 7 (p. 254).

TABLE (*cont.*)

	Place/Tribe	Plin	Stat	Clarifications
148	Zephyre, Aegean island	4.61	—	
149	Gyaros, Aegean island	4.69, etc.	3.438	
150	Agathusa, Aegean island	*4.69	—	“suavis Agathusa nobilis unguento”: “Telos unguento nobilis, a Callimacho Agathusa appellata” (Plin. <i>NH</i> 4.69.5–6).
151	Schinusa, Aegean island	*4.68	—	“ventis agitata Schinusa”.
152	Petaliae, Aegean island	*4.71	—	
153	Thasus, Aegean island	4.73	5.183	“bis clara Thasos”.
154	Calymna, Aegean island	*4.71	—	“Calymna ferox”.
155	Helene, island off Attica’s east coast	4.62	—	
156	Imbros, Aegean island	4.72	—	“nobilis Imbros”.
157	Pharmacusa, Aegean island	4.71	—	“Pharmacusa etiam medicis memorabilis herbis” <i>E</i> : “simul medicis non indigna sucis” <i>M</i> (<i>in rasura</i>).
158	Sciathus, Aegean island	4.72	—	
159	Lamponia, Aegean island	*4.74	—	“crebra micans Lamponia flamma”.
160	Aethria, Aegean island	4.73/5.133		“Aetherea” (cf. app. crit. Plin. <i>NH</i> 5.133, l. 4: “Etherea”).
161	Glauce (?)			
162	Aegilia, Aegean island	4.65	—	“Boggillia” <i>E</i> : “Begilia” <i>M</i> (cf. app. crit. Plin. <i>NH</i> 4.65, l. 16: “Begilia”).

	Place/Tribe	Plin	Stat	Clarifications
163	Samothrace, Aegean island	4.73	—	
164	Lesbos, Aegean island	5.139, etc.	—	“Lesbos, natale solum tibi, mascula Sappho Infelix quae iam Phaonis correpta furore Leucadium proprio maculasti sanguine saxum”: “mascula Sappho” (Hor. <i>E.</i> 1.19.28).
165	Lemnus, Aegean island	4.73	5.50, etc.	“Femineaque etiam rabie notissima Lemnos, cuius adusque forum fertur iaculari umbram, Altus Athos, Cancrī cum sol penetraverit ora”: “incipit: Aegaeo premitur circumflua Nereo Lemnos, ubi ignifera fessus respirat ab Aetna Mulciber; ingenti tellurem proximus umbra vestit Athos nemorumque obscurat imagine pontum . . .” (Stat. <i>Theb.</i> 5.49)
166	Rhodus, Aegean island	5.104, etc.	—	“Rhodos insignis Phoebe radiante colosso”.
167	Cyprus, island (<i>Mediterranean Sea</i>)	5.92, etc.	—	“Spumigenae etiam Veneri gratissima Cypros”.
168	Chios, Aegean island	4.51	—	“Arvisii vini Chios gratissima nutrix”.
169–218 <i>Emphasis on the regions of Northern Greece</i> (fols. <i>Eiv^v–Fir</i>) (but see nos. 187–88, 203).				
169	Tempe, valley (<i>Thessaly</i>)	4.31	10.119	“Thessala Tempe”: “Thessala Tempe” (Stat. <i>Ach.</i> 1.237).
170	Larissa, town (<i>Thessaly</i>)	4.29, etc.	4.44, etc.	“Larissa potens armis”: “huic armat Larissa viros” (Stat. <i>Theb.</i> 4.44).
171	Phthia, town (<i>Thessaly</i>)	4.29	—	“Phthia, superbi Aeacidis natale solum”.
172	Crannon, town (<i>Thessaly</i>)	4.29, 4.32	—	“Crannon cruentum”.
173	Pteleum, forest (<i>Thessaly</i>)	4.29	—	“Pteleum nemus magnum”.

TABLE (*cont.*)

	Place/Tribe	Plin	Stat	Clarifications
174	Thaumacie, town (<i>Thessaly</i>)	*4.32	—	1. “Thaumantia” <i>E</i> : “Thaumacia” <i>M</i> (no corresponding variant reading). 2. “Thaumacie ingens”. 3. As a people, the “Thaumaci” are mentioned in Liv. 32.4.3.
175	Illetia, town (<i>Thessaly</i>)	*4.29	—	
176	Pherae, town (<i>Thessaly</i>)	4.29	—	
177	Castana, town (<i>Thessaly</i>)	*4.32	—	
178	Atrax, town (<i>Thessaly</i>)	*4.29	—	“invidus Atrax”.
179	Holmon, town (<i>Thessaly</i>)	*4.29	—	1. “Elmon” <i>E</i> : “Helmon” <i>M</i> (cf. app. crit. Plin. <i>NH</i> 4.29, l. 4: “Elmon”). 2. “infelix Holmon”.
180	Gomphi, town (<i>Thessaly</i>)	4.29	—	
181	Pagasa, town (<i>Thessaly</i>)	4.29 ¹⁵	—	“Pagasea rura”.
182	Methone, town (<i>Thessaly</i>)	4.32	—	“Methone ferox”.
183	Acharne, town (<i>Thessaly</i>)	*4.32	—	In Stat. <i>Theb.</i> 12.623, “Acharnae” refers to a borough of Attica.
184	Aeantium, promontory (<i>Thessaly</i>)	*4.32 ¹⁶	—	“Aeantia ferox”.
185	Haemus, mountain (<i>Thrace</i>)	4.41, 45	11.195	“qui colunt Haemi scopulos”.
186	Pindus, mountain (<i>Thessaly</i>)	4.30	—	“et culmina Pindi Vnde ferunt vatem pedibus manibusque secutas Threicium quondam plaudentibus Orphea silvas”.

15 “Pagasa”

16 “Aeantium”

	Place/Tribe	Plin	Stat	Clarifications
187	Parnassus, mountain (<i>Phocis</i>)	4.7	1.629, etc.	"Parnassi iugum geminum".
188	Cirrha, town (<i>Phocis</i>)	4.7	—	"Cyrrea saxa".
189	Olympus, mountain (<i>Thessaly</i>)	4.30	5.85, etc.	"Ac nubes celso superantem vertice Olympum".
190	Pelium, mountain (<i>Thessaly</i>)	4.30	8.79, etc.	
191	Othrys, mountain (<i>Thessaly</i>)	4.30	4.655, etc.	"Othrymque nivusum": "Othrymque nivalem" (Verg. <i>A.</i> 7.675).
192	Thessaloniki, city (<i>Thessaly</i>)	4.36, etc.	—	"Quique serunt agros pingues nimiumque feraces, Thessalonica".
193	Emathia, region (<i>Macedonia</i>)	4.33	—	"tuos etiam camposque cruentos Emathios quondam civili sanguine mersos Romuleo et Latii qui iam videre ruinam" (cf. Luc. <i>Phar.</i> 1.1).
194	Aegae, town (<i>Macedonia</i>)	4.33	—	"tumulis regum Macedonum memorabilis Aegae": "oppida Aegae, in quo sepeliri mos reges" (Plin. <i>NH</i> 4.33).
195	Aloros, town (<i>Macedonia</i>)	4.34	—	"Oloros" (cf. app. crit. Plin. <i>NH</i> 4.34, l. 13: "Oloros").
196	(?) Pydna, town (<i>Macedonia</i>)	4.34	—	"Thinna ferox" (cf. app. crit. Plin. <i>NH</i> 4.34, l. 13: "Phina").
197	Tyrisa, town (<i>Macedonia</i>)	*4.34 ¹⁷	—	"Tyrisa dira".
198	Paeonians, tribe (<i>Macedonia</i>)	4.35 ¹⁸	—	"Paeoniiue etiam medicis gens inclita succis".

17 "Tyrisaei"

18 "amnis Paeonia"

TABLE (*cont.*)

	Place/Tribe	Plin	Stat	Clarifications
199	Scotusians, tribe (<i>Macedonia</i>)	4.35	—	“Scotusaei feri”.
200	Mygdonians, tribe (<i>Macedonia</i>)	4.35	—	“longis Mygdones armis”.
201	Phlegra (<i>Macedonia</i>)	4.36	2.595	“Phlegra non humilis violenta morte Gigantum Quos pater omnipotens flagranti fulmine cunctos ad Stygias latebras atque horrida Tartara adegit”.
202	Eordaea, town (<i>Macedonia</i>)	4.34	—	“Fordea” (cf. app. crit. Plin. <i>NH</i> 4.34, l. 17: “Fordea”, <i>edd. recc.</i> “Phordea”).
203	Hermione, town (<i>Peloponnesus</i>)	4.18	—	
204	Dicaea, town (<i>Macedonia</i>)	*4.36, etc.	—	“Dicaea magna”.
205	Othryonei, tribe (<i>Thessaly</i>)	*4.35	—	“Othrynei”.
206	Pelagonians, tribe (<i>Macedonia</i>)	4.35	—	“saevi Pelagones”.
207	Ampelus, cape (<i>Chalcidice</i>)	4.37	—	1. “Ampelos potens”. 2. Plin. wrongly describes it as a town (cf. <i>NP</i> s.v. “Ampelus”, 3).
208	Pallene, town (<i>Macedonia</i>)	4.36	—	
209	Potidaea, town (<i>Macedonia</i>)	4.36	—	
210	Rhodope, mountain (<i>Thrace</i>)	4.35, etc.	2.81, etc.	“celsa Rodope”.
211	Scopius = Scombrus mountain (<i>Thrace</i>)	*4.35	—	“Scopium nivosum”.

	Place/Tribe	Plin	Stat	Clarifications
212	Pella, town (<i>Macedonia</i>)	4.34	—	“Pella magnanimi genetrix dulcissima Pyrrhi”.
213	Myscella, town (<i>Macedonia</i>)	4.36	—	“Phissella potens armis” (cf. app. crit. Plin. <i>NH</i> 4.36, l. 4: “Physcella”, <i>edd. recc.</i> “Iscella”, “Physella”).
214	Scydra, town (<i>Macedonia</i>)	*4.34	—	“avia Scydra”.
215	Athos, mountain (<i>Macedonia</i>)	4.36	5.52	“monacis dicatus Athos” <i>E</i> : “monacis habitatus Athos” <i>M</i> (<i>in rasura</i>)
216	Orbelus, mountain (<i>Macedonia</i> / <i>Thrace</i>)	4.35	—	“celsus Orobellus” (cf. app. crit. Plin. <i>NH</i> 4.35, l. 4: “Orobellus”).
217	Hypsizonus, mountain (<i>Macedonia</i>)	*4.36	—	“Ipsizorus altus candenti vertice semper” (cf. app. crit. Plin. <i>NH</i> 4.36, l. 1: “Ipsizorus”, with Lloyd-Jones and Rea 1972: 138–40).
218	Epirus, region (<i>Epirus</i>)	4.2	—	“Alipedumque etiam genetrix Epirus equarum”.

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